

Town of Sheffield, Massachusetts

Housing Needs Assessment

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BRPC
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission



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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background and Purpose

The Town of Sheffield requested the assistance of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to perform an assessment of the current state of housing in the Town in preparation for the development of a Housing Production Plan. This report provides detailed information about the existing housing stock and will assist in clarifying the need for senior, accessible, and affordable housing in Sheffield. Funding for this report and the upcoming Housing Production Plan was provided through the District Local Technical Assistance program. While the most recently available data is used throughout this assessment, it is important to note the 2020 Decennial Census data was not yet available and much of the data used does not reflect housing changes that have taken place since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in February of 2020.

1.2 Summary of Key Demographics & Findings

Sheffield is the second most populous municipality in southern Berkshire County. As of the 2019 American Community Survey, the population of Sheffield was estimated at 3,160 but between 2000 and 2019, the Town experienced a 5% decline in population. During the same time, the median age of Sheffield residents increased from 40.5 years old to 52.3 years old, making Sheffield an aging community.

The most recent data (May 2021) shows that Sheffield's labor force consists of 1,837 and the unemployment rate was 4.4% which is lower than the rate for Berkshire County (7.0%) and the State (6.1%).¹ Seventy percent (70%) of the average monthly employment in Sheffield is in service-providing jobs. The industries with the highest share of employment were *Education and Health Services* (29%), *Trade, Transportation, and Utilities* (14%), and *Manufacturing* (13%). Together, these industries accounted for 56% of all employment.²

¹ Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance
<https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/LaborForceAndUnemployment#>

² Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance: Employment and Wages Report (ES-202)
<https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/lmi/EmploymentAndWages#>

From 2010 to 2019, per capita income in Sheffield increased by 52%: from \$32,000 to \$48,782. It should be noted that per capita income is calculated by dividing the sum of all residents' incomes by the total number of residents and many residents do not earn income, so this figure tends to be low. For this reason, this assessment focuses on median household income because it has a higher degree of accuracy. Median household income in Sheffield is estimated at \$86,184. Owner-occupied households have a higher median household income (\$92,357) when compared to renter-occupied households (\$34,861).³

There are a total of 1,859 housing units, with the highest percentage having 3 bedrooms (791). Sheffield's housing stock, which includes both houses and apartments, is aging as 56% of homes were built prior to 1970 making them over fifty years old.⁴

Eighty-four percent (84%) of occupied housing units are owner-occupied, and owner-occupied housing is primarily single-family detached dwellings (84%). The average listed home price (accessed 6/23/21 through www.zillow.com) was \$1,190,745 and the median listed home price was \$617,000. Two of the total 20 active listing are in excess of \$1,000,000 and one of them is over \$11,000,000. When these homes are removed from the equation, the average listed price is reduced to \$581,939 and the median listed price is \$597,000.

There were an estimated 514 householders that experienced a cost burden in 2019, and it is likely to have risen given the information cited above. This figure comprises 37% of the total 1,384 occupied housing units. Housing cost burden means that housing costs are at least 30% of household income and is viewed as a sign of economic stress on households.⁵ Ideally, no more than 30% should be allocated towards housing costs to allow for balanced household spending.

Sixteen percent (16%) of the occupied housing units are renter-occupied. Fifty percent (50%) of renter households earn less than \$35,000 annually, and with the median gross rent estimated at \$968, many workers cannot afford housing in Sheffield without being cost burdened. In fact,

³ 2019 American Community Survey, Table B25119

⁴ 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP04

⁵ 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2503

59% of renters are housing cost burdened.⁶ A quick search for rental properties on www.zillow.com on June 23rd, 2021, yielded no available rental properties in Sheffield. This is not the only available source to search for rental properties, but it provides an indication of how limited the overall rental stock is.

The vast majority of seniors (age 65+) in Sheffield own their home (89%). About half of senior owners moved into their home in 1989 or earlier, indicating long-term homeownership and equity appreciation.⁷ Fifty-six percent (56%) of all senior householders have annual incomes above \$60,000 per year, with 45% senior householders earning more than \$100,000 annually.⁸ Senior renters are relatively new to their homes; 56% moved in since the year 2000. In Sheffield, 41% of senior renters are cost burdened.⁹

1.3 Summary of Recommendations

- Form a Sheffield Housing Production Plan Committee, which working with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Select Board and Town residents, will develop a housing production plan. The 5-7 Committee members should have representation by the Planning Board, Housing Commission, Select Board, and volunteers, and ad hoc advisors. Provide opportunities for public input.
- Ensure the final Housing Production Plan, which requires adopted by the Planning Board and the Select Board, meets all MA housing production plan requirements.
- Investigate available state and other housing grants and develop a grant calendar, with benefits of each grant to be applied for, in line with housing production plan; apply for 1 or more grants in FY22/FY23.
- Continue applications for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) housing rehabilitation funding.
- Review Zoning By-Laws for additional housing related uses or changes recommended by the housing production plan committee.
- Review and possibly revise current Zoning By-Law to regulate short-term rentals.
- Direct short-term rental tax revenue towards housing production plan goals.

⁶ 2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25003, B25118, B25064

⁷ 2019 American Community Survey, Table B25128

⁸ 2019 American Community Survey, Table B19037

⁹ 2019 American Community Survey, Table B25072

- Review adoption of a 1% Community Preservation Act (CPA) tax to be directed toward implementation of the housing production plan.
- Evaluate blighted housing properties for inclusion in the MA AG's blighted housing program.
- Identify and qualify housing production non-profits to implement the housing production plan.
- Identify opportunities to work with non-profits, including land conservancy organizations, on housing in Sheffield.
- Upgrade existing broadband build out or install fiber optic broadband internet throughout town, which could enable more work-from-home options.

1.4 Methodology

This assessment was compiled using a model provided by Massachusetts Housing Partnership as outlined in the *Housing Needs Workbook: Assessing Community Needs*. For more information, visit: <https://www.housingtoolbox.org/writable/files/resources/mhphousingneeds.pdf>.

Data for this assessment came from various sources, including:

- United States Decennial Census
- American Community Survey
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, www.huduser.gov
- Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development
- University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute
- Banker and Tradesman and Zillow
- Berkshire County Board of Realtors & MLS
- Massachusetts Department of Revenue
- Community Software Consortium (Assessors' data)
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission: Fair Housing Equity Assessment

1.5 Preface

A Housing Needs Assessment is largely a data-driven document. For this reason, it is important to explain the data sources used in this assessment. The majority of the information presented

has been collected from the United States Census Bureau. The Census Bureau is the largest statistical agency in the country and provides data on America's people, places, and economy.

The Census Bureau conducts a host of surveys and programs, but this report relies heavily on the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey. The Decennial Census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution to count each resident of the country every ten years on the year ending in zero. The Decennial Census questions account for population, age, gender, race, and some basic questions about housing. Since the goal is to reach every resident and the questions asked are easily quantifiable, the information gathered comes with a high degree of accuracy. The results of the Decennial Census determine the number of seats for each state in the U.S. House of Representatives and are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts and to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds each year.

The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis. This survey is sent to approximately 295,000 addresses on a monthly basis, which equates to about 3.5 million addresses per year. Since the number of people surveyed is less than during the Decennial Census and much more extensive questions are included, the results come with a lesser degree of accuracy compared to the Decennial Census. The 2020 Decennial Census data was not release in time for use in this assessment.

It should also be noted that this report was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic which began impacting the United States in the beginning of 2020. COVID-19 has affected virtually every aspect of the socio-economic milieu on a global scale. Despite the widespread impacts, the data sources that track short-term changes caused by the pandemic especially as relates to housing are limited. While this assessment accounts for fluctuations in unemployment and home sales, aside from these topics, the data presented in this assessment treats COVID-19 as a statistical anomaly.

2. Demographic Profile

2.1 Population

As of the 2019 American Community Survey, the population of Sheffield was 3,160. Between 1960 and 2019, Sheffield's population increased by 48%, but between 2000 and 2019 it had decreased by 5%. The only other towns in southern Berkshire County that experienced a decrease in population over the same time were Great Barrington and Monterey. Berkshire County as a whole experienced a decline in population over the same time.

Table 2.1 - Southern Berkshire County: Population Change (1960 - 2019)

Town/County	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
Sheffield	2,138	2,374	2,743	2,903	3,335	3,257	3,160
Alford	256	302	394	413	399	494	431
Egremont	895	1,138	1,311	1,177	1,345	1,225	1,402
Great Barrington	6,624	7,537	7,405	7,841	7,527	7,104	6,901
Monterey	480	600	818	774	934	961	774
Mount Washington	34	52	93	135	130	167	148
New Marlborough	1,083	1,031	1,160	1,233	1,494	1,509	1,544
Otis	473	820	963	1,067	1,365	1,612	1,393
Sandisfield	536	547	720	667	824	915	891
Berkshire County	142,135	149,402	145,110	139,352	134,953	131,219	126,425

Source: United States Decennial Census, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05

The population of Sheffield grew older between 2000 and 2019, with the median age increasing from 40.5 to 52.3 years old. The oldest age cohort increased in population by 65% and the second oldest cohort (ages 55-64 years old) increased by 40%. Furthermore, the 0-19 age cohort declined by 41% and the 35-54 age cohort declined by 34%. Overall, the population in Sheffield has experienced a decline in younger age groups and an increase in older age groups, which has led to the overall increase of the median age.

Table 2.2 - Sheffield: Population Distribution by Age (2000 - 2019)

Age Cohort	Total Population (2000)	Percent of Total Population (2000)	Total Population (2019)	Percent of Total Population (2019)	Percent Change
0-19 years old	860	26%	505	16%	-41%
20-34 years old	412	12%	477	15%	+16%
35-54 years old	1,149	34%	763	24%	-34%
55-64 years old	384	12%	539	17%	+40%
65+ years old	530	16%	876	28%	+65%
Total Population	3,335	100%	3,160	100%	-5%
Median Age	40.5	-	52.3	-	+29%

Source: 2010 United States Decennial Census Table P12, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05

While it is beyond this assessment to analyze reasons for change in population distribution, it is clear from the above table that fewer children are being born in Sheffield, which may also be due to the declining 35-54 year old cohort. Many residents do point to the high cost of land and construction costs, as well as high prices for already built homes and lack of rentals, as a reason why their children cannot stay in Sheffield upon completion of high school or return until later in their lives. However, it is hopeful to see the 16% increase in the 20-34 year old cohort between 2000 and 2019.

Table 2.2.1 - Southern Berkshire County: Population Distribution by Age

Age cohorts by number and percent	0-19 yrs. old		20-34 yrs. old		35-54 yrs. old		55-64 yrs. old		65+ yrs. old	
Sheffield	505	16%	477	15%	763	24%	539	17%	876	28%
Alford	64	15%	35	8%	67	16%	68	16%	197	46%
Egremont	266	19%	143	10%	395	28%	207	15%	391	28%
Great Barrington	1,746	25%	970	14%	1,478	21%	1,130	16%	1,577	23%
Monterey	136	18%	47	6%	156	20%	153	20%	282	36%
Mount Washington	4	3%	17	11%	55	37%	24	16%	48	32%
New Marlborough	282	18%	147	10%	381	25%	298	19%	436	28%
Otis	145	10%	168	12%	394	28%	295	21%	391	28%
Sandisfield	201	23%	82	9%	239	27%	138	15%	231	26%
Berkshire County	25,349	20%	21,662	17%	30,174	24%	20,620	16%	28,620	23%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05

While Sheffield's population has only declined 5% since 2000, the UMass Donahue Institute projects the population decline will continue. By 2040, the total population is projected to be 2,419 people: a decline of 23%. Every age cohort in Sheffield is projected to experience a decline except the cohort of residents aged 65 and over. This group is projected to see a 31% increase by 2040. More details are found in the following table. Please note this table does not show the results or age cohort breakdown from the 2020 Decennial Census.

Table 2.3 - Sheffield: Population Projection (2019 - 2040)

Age Cohort	2019 ACS	2040 Population Projections	Percent of Total Population (2040)	Percent Change
0-19 years old	505	151	6%	-70%
20-34 years old	477	121	5%	-75%
35-54 years old	763	603	25%	-21%
55-64 years old	539	398	16%	-26%
Age 65+	876	1,146	47%	+31%
Total Population	3,160	2,419	-	-23%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05; UMass Donahue Institute Population Projections

2.2 Race

Like all Berkshire County municipalities, Sheffield is predominantly white. Estimates from the Census Bureau show that Sheffield is less racially diverse than any other town in southern Berkshire County, with 99.6% of the population being white.

Table 2.4 - Southern Berkshire County: Race

Race	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races
Sheffield	99.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Alford	96.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%
Egremont	93.3%	1.1%	2.6%	1.4%	0.2%	1.1%	0.4%
Great Barrington	89.5%	3.8%	0.1%	2.8%	0.0%	2.8%	1.1%
Monterey	97.5%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	1.4%	0.3%
Mount Washington	94.6	0.0%	2.7%	1.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
New Marlborough	97.5%	1.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Otis	98.6%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Sandisfield	96.4	0.9%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	1.8%
Berkshire County	90.6%	2.8%	0.3%	1.8%	0.1%	1.7%	2.8%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05

2.3 Poverty and Homelessness

As of 2019, 262 or 8.3% of Sheffield's residents lived below the poverty level. This was slightly lower than the countywide rate of 10.9%. Of those Sheffield residents living below the poverty level, 207 or 20.6% were below the age of 65. This meant that 9% of the total 65 and under population lived below the poverty line.

Table 2.5 - Sheffield: People Living Below Poverty Level

Age Cohort	Total Population (2019)	Population Below Poverty Level	Percent Below Poverty Level	County Percent Below Poverty Level
Under Age 65	2,284	207	20.6%	26.2%
Age 65 and Over	876	55	6.3%	7.1%
Total Population*	3,160	262	8.3%	10.9%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S1701

* Total population for whom poverty was calculated may be lower than total municipal population because not everyone who responds to the ACS reports their income so the Census Bureau cannot calculate for the entire town.

Data on homelessness is challenging to collect since homeless people do not have a mailing address. For this reason, the Census Bureau cannot track homelessness. Sheffield has not sponsored homeless shelters and has no reports of people sleeping overnight in public or federal buildings. The Three County Continuum of Care (CoC) has generated the following estimates at the County level:

Table 2.6 - Berkshire County: Homelessness

Category	Sheltered*	Unsheltered	Total
Total people:	89	27	116
Age 18-24:	5	4	9
Over age 24:	84	23	107
Female:	30	9	39
Male:	59	18	77
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino:	77	26	103
Hispanic/Latino:	12	1	13
White:	63	22	85
Black or African American:	15	4	19
Asian:	2	0	2
American Indian or Alaska Native:	3	0	3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:	0	1	1
Multiple Races:	6	0	6
Chronically Homeless:	3	10	13

Source: Three County Continuum of Care 2020 PIT by County, 1/29/20

*Sheltered in this context means residing in an emergency shelter or in a 2-year limited transitional housing program.

2.4 Employment and Income

In May of 2021, Sheffield's unemployment rate was 4.4%. This was lower than the state's rate of 6.1%, and lower than the countywide rate of 7.0%, and was average among neighboring municipalities. Between May 2020 and May 2021, Sheffield's unemployment rate decreased 5.8%, from 10.2% to 4.4%. The spike in the unemployment rates is one of the many impacts of COVID-19, as reflected in the 2020 figures, but the unemployment rates of 2021 have returned to the typical percentages seen in each municipality listed.

Table 2.7 - Southern Berkshire County: Unemployment Rates & Labor Force

Municipality	Unemployment Rate (5/2020)	Unemployment Rate (5/2021)	Labor Force (5/2021)	Population Employed (5/2021)	Population Unemployed (5/2021)
Sheffield	10.2%	4.4%	1,837	1,756	81
Alford	5.1%	2.1%	235	230	5
Egremont	6.2%	3.9%	717	689	28
Great Barrington	14.9%	6.0%	3,741	3,517	224
Monterey	9.4%	5.1%	434	412	22
Mount Washington	10.1%	1.2%	81	80	1
New Marlborough	11.8%	5.0%	813	772	41
Otis	12.4%	3.3%	750	725	25
Sandisfield	8.6%	7.3%	478	443	35
Berkshire County	14.9%	7.0%	62,212	57,872	4,340
Massachusetts	15.4%	6.1%	3,833,200	3,518,600	229,000

Source: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance

<https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/LaborForceAndUnemployment#>

Note: Unemployment rates do not reflect seasonal adjustments.

Twelve percent (12%) of Sheffield households earned under \$25,000 in 2019; 22% earned between \$25,000 and \$49,999; 10% earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999; and 56% earned \$75,000 or more.

Between 2010 and 2019, the share of Sheffield households earning under \$25,000 decreased by 53%; the share earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999 decreased by 32%; the share earning between \$50,000 and \$74,999 decreased by 30%; and the share earning \$75,000 or more

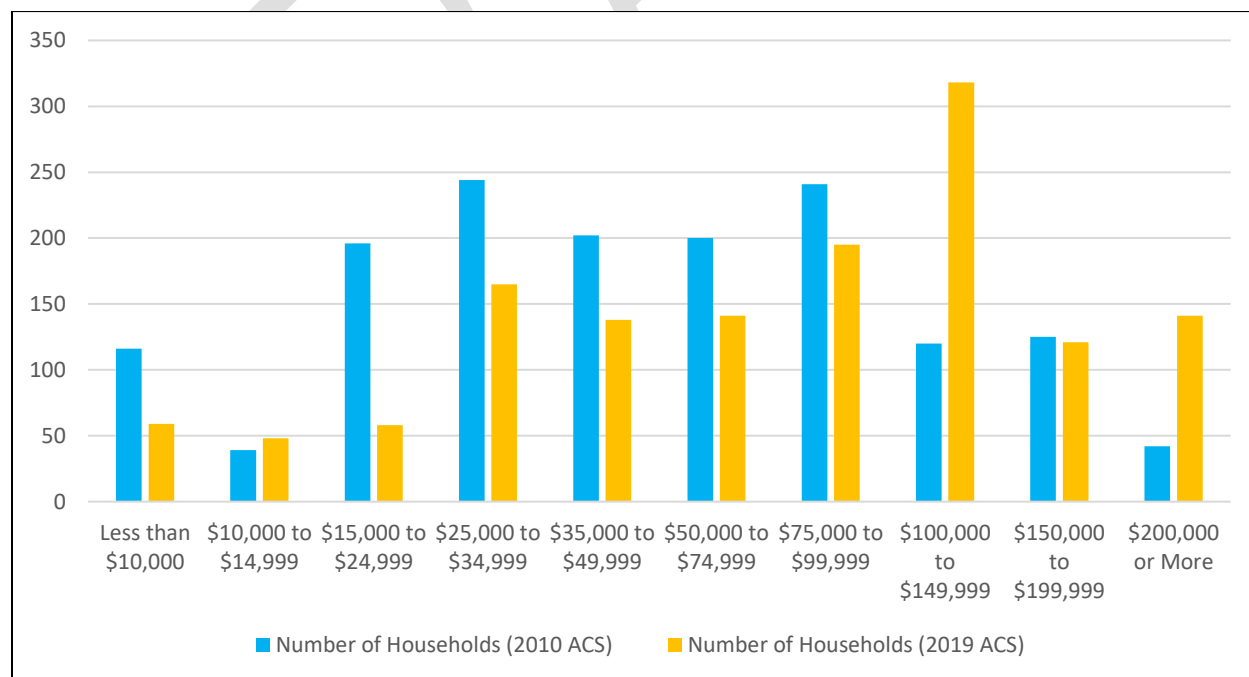
increased by 47%. Part of these income level changes may be explained by the self-employed workforce, many of whom have seasonal businesses; the low population of 35-54 year olds; and the increasing numbers of second-home owners and out-of-town retirees.

Table 2.8 - Sheffield: Households by Income Level

Income Level	Number of Households (2010 ACS)	Number of Households (2019 ACS)	% of Total Households (2019 ACS)	Percent Change
Less than \$10,000	116	59	4.3%	-49%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	39	48	3.5%	+23%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	196	58	4.2%	-70%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	244	165	11.9%	-32%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	202	138	10.0%	-32%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	200	141	10.2%	-30%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	241	195	14.1%	-19%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	120	318	23.0%	+165%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	125	121	8.7%	-3%
\$200,000 or More	42	141	10.2%	+236%
Total Households	1,525	1,384	100%	-9%

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03

Figure 2.1 - Sheffield: Households by Income (2010 - 2019)



Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03

In 2019, Sheffield experienced average economic distress when compared to the surrounding communities as measured by households earning below the area median income. Thirty-five percent (35%) of households in Sheffield earned 80% or less of the area median income. This was higher than the rate for Alford, Egremont, Otis and Sandisfield and lower than the rate for Great Barrington, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, and Berkshire County as a whole. Thirteen (13%) of Sheffield households earned between 50.1% and 80% of the area median income; 12% earned between 30.1% and 50%; and 10% earned less than 30%.

The changes in income from 2010 to 2019 are not adjusted for inflation by the Census Bureau. While inflation, increases in cost of living, higher paying jobs, and an influx of more affluent residents are national trends, they had a significant impact on Sheffield. The changes shown in the previous chart on household incomes are not an indication of significant changes in types of jobs, but rather these aforementioned economic variables.

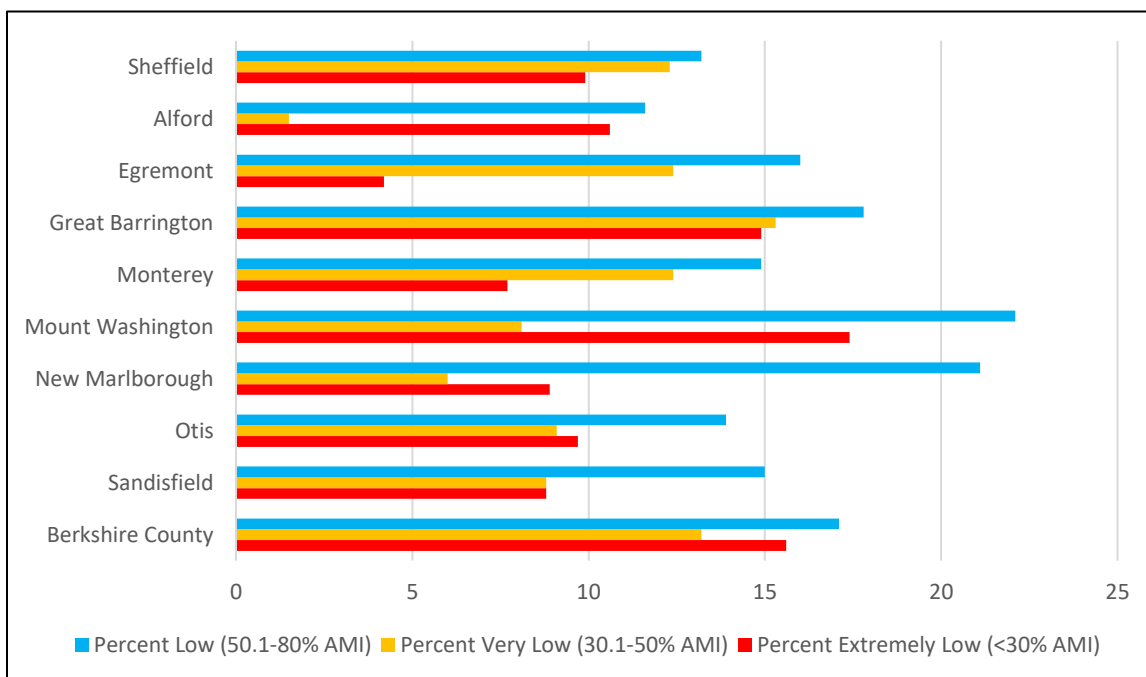
Table 2.9 - Southern Berkshire County: Percentage of Households by Area Median Income

Municipality	Total Households	Extremely Low Income (<30% AMI) Households		Very Low Income (30-50%) Households		Low Income (50.1-80% AMI) Households	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sheffield	1,384	137	9.9%	170	12.3%	182	13.2%
Alford	198	21	10.6%	3	1.5%	23	11.6%
Egremont	614	26	4.2%	76	12.4%	98	16.0%
Great Barrington	2,813	420	14.9%	429	15.3%	501	17.8%
Monterey	362	28	7.7%	45	12.4%	54	14.9%
Mount Washington	86	15	17.4%	7	8.1%	19	22.1%
New Marlborough	683	61	8.9%	41	6.0%	144	21.1%
Otis	691	67	9.7%	63	9.1%	96	13.9%
Sandisfield	353	31	8.8%	31	8.8%	53	15.0%
Berkshire County	54,813	8,549	15.6%	7,209	13.2%	9,347	17.1%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03; US Department of Housing and Urban Development 2021 Income Limits

Note: Calculated using AMI income limits for a 2-person household because average household size for the County is 2.2

Figure 2.2 - Southern Berkshire County: Percentage of Households by Area Median Income



Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03; US Department of Housing and Urban Development 2021 Income Limits

Seventy-three percent (73%) of all jobs in Sheffield were service-providing and 27% were goods-producing. An example of a service-providing job is working in a restaurant and an example of a goods-producing job is working on an agricultural farm that produces crops. The average weekly wage for all jobs was \$957, while goods-producing jobs' average weekly wage of \$1,225 was 43% higher than that of service-providing jobs. Although the number of average monthly employment has not notably changed by job type since 2010, there has been an increase in average weekly wages across all industries seen in Sheffield, Berkshire County, and Massachusetts as a whole.

Table 2.10 - Sheffield: Average Weekly Wage by Job Type (2010 - 2019)

Job Type	Average Weekly Wage (2010)	Average Weekly Wage (2019)	Average Monthly Employment (2010)	Average Monthly Employment (2019)	Percent of Average Total Monthly Employment (2019)
Service-providing Jobs	\$658	\$856	1,053	1,093	73%
Goods-producing Jobs	\$977	\$1,225	451	414	27%
Total (all industries)	\$756	\$957	1,504	1,507	100%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance: Employment and Wages Report (ES-202) 2010 and 2019, <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/lmi/EmploymentAndWages#>

On average, service-providing employees in Sheffield earned less than employees throughout Berkshire County and Massachusetts. However, the wages paid for service-providing jobs in both Sheffield and Berkshire County as a whole are comparable.

Table 2.11 - Sheffield, Berkshire County, and Massachusetts: Average Weekly Wages (2010 - 2019)

Job Type	Sheffield Average Weekly Wage (2010)	Sheffield Average Weekly Wage (2019)	Berkshire County Average Weekly Wage (2010)	Berkshire County Average Weekly Wage (2019)	MA Average Weekly Wage (2010)	MA Average Weekly Wage (2019)	Sheffield Percent of MA Average (2019)
Service-providing Jobs	\$658	\$856	\$699	\$891	\$1,079	\$1,426	66%
Goods-producing Jobs	\$977	\$1,225	\$1,052	\$1,174	\$1,350	\$1,645	34%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance: Employment and Wages Report (ES-202) 2010 and 2019 <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/lmi/EmploymentAndWages#>

In 2019, the industries in Sheffield with the highest share of employment were *Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance* (23%), *Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services* (12%), and *Construction* (12%). Together, these industries accounted for 47% of all employment.

Data on the top employers in Sheffield has been sourced from the Hoovers database which is a tool available via subscription to Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). D&B is a private corporation that offers information on commercial credit as well as reports on businesses. D&B uses the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) which is often required for grant applications and other financial activity. The following is a list of the top employers in Sheffield:

- Southern Berkshire Regional School District (180 employees)
- Berkshire School (160 employees)
- Sheffield Plastics (140 employees)

Between 2010 and 2019, overall employment in Sheffield increased by 3%. However, several industries experienced significant declines. The largest declines were in *Information* (-100%) and *Transportation & Warehousing, and Utilities* (-86%). By contrast, the largest increases were in *Other Services, except Public Administration* (166%), *Wholesale Trade* (35%), and *Public Administration* (35%). The reduction of jobs in retail trade is likely due to seasonal fluctuations and a higher number of residents working retail jobs outside of Sheffield.

Table 2.12 - Sheffield: Industry Distribution (2010 - 2019)

Industry	Sheffield (2010)	Sheffield (2019)	Percent of Total Jobs (2019)	Percent Change
Civilian Employed population 16 years & older	1,764	1,810	-	+3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, and Mining	88	86	4.8%	-2%
Construction	196	209	11.5%	+7%
Manufacturing	107	85	4.7%	-21%
Wholesale Trade	20	27	1.5%	+35%
Retail Trade	233	198	10.9%	-15%
Transportation & Warehousing, and Utilities	69	10	0.6%	-86%
Information	18	0	0.0%	-100%
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	127	122	6.7%	-4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services	195	216	11.9%	+11%
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	406	420	23.2%	+3%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation & Food Service	180	167	9.2%	-7%
Other Services, except Public Administration	77	205	11.3%	+166%
Public Administration	48	65	3.6%	+35%

Sources 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03

Table 2.12.1 - Sheffield, Berkshire County, and Massachusetts: Industry Distribution (2010 - 2019)

Industry	Sheffield (2010)	Sheffield (2019)	Berkshire County (2010)	Berkshire County (2019)	MA (2010)	MA (2019)
Civilian Employed population 16 years & older	1,764	1,810	63,416	64,008	3,271,535	3,612,375
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, and Mining	88	86	639	634	12,821	14,795
Construction	196	209	4,594	4,209	191,971	205,718
Manufacturing	107	85	5,990	5,021	323,351	317,827
Wholesale Trade	20	27	1,286	835	87,944	78,806
Retail Trade	233	198	8,007	7,778	350,202	370,824
Transportation & Warehousing, and Utilities	69	10	1,843	2,256	123,187	140,484
Information	18	0	1,437	1,242	88,659	82,102
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	127	122	3,364	3,230	264,145	265,085
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services	195	216	5,301	6,241	416,530	506,967
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	406	420	18,596	20,142	872,032	1,018,564
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation & Food Service	180	167	6,982	6,860	261,420	312,504
Other Services, except Public Administration	77	205	2,714	3,408	146,731	161,589
Public Administration	48	65	2,663	2,152	132,542	137,110

Sources 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP03

2.5 Housing Overview

Sheffield's housing stock is significantly older, with over half of the entire stock built before 1970 (50 years old or more) and over a third of all units were built prior to 1940 (80 years old or more). However, almost 10% of the housing stock was built since 2000. The following table categorizes homes based on age as estimated by the American Community Survey.

Table 2.13 - Sheffield: Age of Housing Units

Year structure built	Number of housing units (2019 ACS)	Percent of total housing units	Age of Housing Unit
Built 2014 or later	38	2.0%	5 years or less
Built 2010 to 2013	11	0.6%	6-9 years
Built 2000 to 2009	116	6.2%	10-19 years
Built 1990 to 1999	193	10.4%	20-29 years
Built 1980 to 1989	203	10.9%	30-39 years
Built 1970 to 1979	260	14.0%	40-49 years
Built 1960 to 1969	114	6.1%	50-59 years
Built 1950 to 1959	167	9.0%	60-69 years
Built 1940 to 1949	126	6.8%	70-79 years
Built 1939 or earlier	631	33.9%	80 years +
Total Units	1,859	100%	

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

The majority of Sheffield's housing units (84%) are owner-occupied. These homes tended to have a slightly larger household size (2.38 members) compared to that of renter-occupied units (1.73). Additionally, the median household income of an owner-occupied unit was \$92,357 or 165% higher than that of a renter-occupied unit (\$34,861). This discrepancy translated to fewer homeowner households (33%) being cost burdened than renter households (56%).

Table 2.14 - Sheffield: Homeowner-Occupied vs. Renter-Occupied Housing (2010 - 2019)

Type of Housing (2019)	Number of Occupied Housing Units	Percent of Total Occupied Housing Units	Average Household Size	Median Household Income	Percent Housing Cost Burdened
Owner-occupied	1,165	84%	2.38	\$92,357	33%
Renter-occupied	219	16%	1.73	\$34,861	56%
Type of Housing (2010)					
Owner-occupied	1,156	76%	2.34	\$71,240	42%
Renter-occupied	369	24%	1.50	\$25,846	50%

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Tables DP04, S2503

Note: There is a high margin of error associated with calculating housing cost burden.

In 2019, the majority (73%) of vacant units in Sheffield were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, which may reflect the increase income to be earned from short-term rentals rather than year-round rentals. Twenty-one percent (21%) of vacant units were listed as *other vacant*. This includes homes that were vacant due to being foreclosed upon, being under repair, being abandoned, being involved in legal proceedings, and for other/unknown reasons. The remaining 6% of vacant housing units were for rent. As stated earlier in this assessment, the vacancy rate changed after the emergence of COVID-19, with a search of rental units conducted in May 2021 yielding no available rentals.

Table 2.15 - Sheffield: Vacancy Status

Vacancy Status	Number of Housing Units	Margin of Error	Percent of Total Vacant Units
For rent	27	±42	0%
Rented, not occupied	0	±12	0%
For sale only	0	±12	5%
Sold, not occupied	0	±12	0%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	347	±118	67%
For migrant workers	0	±12	0%
Other vacant	101	±77	28%
Total	475	±123	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25004

According to the Sheffield Town Assessors, and as indicated in Table 2.16 below, the majority of Sheffield residential properties (74%) are used for single-family homes. The next largest

residential use type was multi-use properties for both residential and Chapter 61 lands. It should be noted that residential properties accounted for by the Town Assessors is lower than the number of residential properties estimated by the Census Bureau. This is because there are properties in town that have not yet been assessed or re-assessed due to a sale or other financial transaction.

Table 2.16 - Sheffield: Residential Use Type

Residential Use Type	Quantity
Single-family	1,371
Two-family	31
Three-family	4
Mobile home	22
Multiple houses on one parcel	56
Four to eight units	51
Multi-use, primarily residential	60
Multi-use, residential and commercial	26
Multi-use, residential and Chapter 61	202
Multi-use, residential and industrial	1
Accessory land w/ improvement, i.e. garage, etc.	19
Total	1,843

Source: Sheffield Town Assessors data accessed 8/3/21

The Census Bureau estimates 84% of housing units were in single-family, detached structures. The second most common structure type of a home in Sheffield contained 3 or 4 units.

Table 2.17 - Sheffield: Number of Units in Structure (Rent or Own, 2010 - 2019)

Structure Type	2010 ACS	2019 ACS	Percent of Total Housing (2019 ACS)
1 unit, detached	1,615	1,561	84%
1 unit, attached	0	56	3%
2 units	145	80	4%
3 or 4 units	59	94	5%
5 to 9 units	87	19	1%
10 to 19 units	0	0	0%
20 or more units	42	27	1%
Mobile Home	17	22	1%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0	0%
Total units	1,965	1,859	100

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

Most homes in Sheffield had between two and three bedrooms (66%), with the most common being three-bedroom homes, which comprised 43% of Sheffield's housing stock in 2019. Between 2010 and 2019, homes with two bedrooms experienced the largest percent change, decreasing by 7%. Homes with 4 bedrooms and 5 or more bedrooms increased over the same period which indicated that larger homes are being built over the last decade.

Table 2.18 - Sheffield: Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms (2010 - 2019)

Number of Bedrooms	Percent of Total Housing (2010)	Percent of Total Housing (2019)
No bedroom	2%	1%
1 bedroom	10%	12%
2 bedrooms	30%	23%
3 bedrooms	44%	43%
4 bedrooms	8%	14%
5+ bedrooms	6%	8%
Total units	1,965	1,859

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

There were an estimated 1,165 owner-occupied housing units in Sheffield and 219 renter-occupied units in 2019. The majority of renters (71%) were below the age of 65, with 26% under the age of 35. Homeowners tended to be older, with 83% being age 45 and over.

Table 2.19 - Sheffield: Age of Householder

Age of Householder	Percent of Occupied Housing Units	Renter-occupied Housing Units	Percent Renter-occupied Housing Units	Owner-occupied Housing Units	Percent Owner-occupied Housing Units
Under 35 years old	11%	57	26%	91	8%
35-44 years old	9%	14	6%	115	10%
45-54 years old	14%	44	20%	146	13%
55-64 years old	24%	41	19%	286	25%
65-74 years old	27%	44	20%	330	28%
75-84 years old	10%	0	0%	136	12%
85 years old and older	6%	19	9%	61	5%
Total	-	219	-	1,165	-

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S2502

In 2019, most households (56%) had occupied their homes since at least 2000, with the largest cohort being householders who moved into their homes before 1990 (29%). Renter households tended to have shorter housing tenures, with 38% having moved into their homes in 2017 or after, for less than a 2-year tenure. By contrast, homeowner households tended to have longer housing tenures, with 91% having occupied their homes since before 2017.

Table 2.20 - Sheffield: Household Tenure

Year Householder Moved into Home	Percent of Occupied Housing Units	Number of Renter-occupied Units	Percent of Renter-occupied Units	Number of Owner-occupied Units	Percent of Owner-occupied Units
2017 or later	13%	83	38%	100	9%
2015 to 2016	5%	32	15%	38	3%
2010 to 2014	16%	65	30%	156	13%
2000 to 2009	22%	20	9%	279	24%
1990 to 1999	16%	9	4%	208	18%
1989 and earlier	29%	10	5%	384	33%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S2502

Table 2.21 denotes the HUD income limits used to determine eligibility for assisted housing programs including the Public Housing, Section 8 project-based, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, Section 202 housing for seniors, and Section 811 housing for persons with disabilities programs. HUD develops income limits based on Median Family Income estimates and Fair Market Rent area definitions for each metropolitan area, parts of some metropolitan areas, and each non-metropolitan county.¹⁰ Income limits vary from geographic area to geographic area so you may be eligible in one area but not in another. The income limit depends on both the income limit category and family size. Most state and federal housing subsidy programs limit family income to 80% of AMI.

¹⁰ <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>

Table 2.21 - Berkshire County: Fiscal Year 2021 Income Limits

Median Family Income	FY 2021 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
\$83,900	Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits	\$17,700	\$20,200	\$22,750	\$26,500	\$31,040	\$35,580	\$40,120	\$44,660
	Very Low (50%) Income Limits	\$29,450	\$33,650	\$37,850	\$42,050	\$45,450	\$48,800	\$52,150	\$55,550
	Low (80%) Income Limits	\$47,150	\$53,850	\$60,600	\$67,300	\$72,700	\$78,100	\$83,500	\$88,850

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development FY 2021 Income Limits
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2021/2021summary.odn>

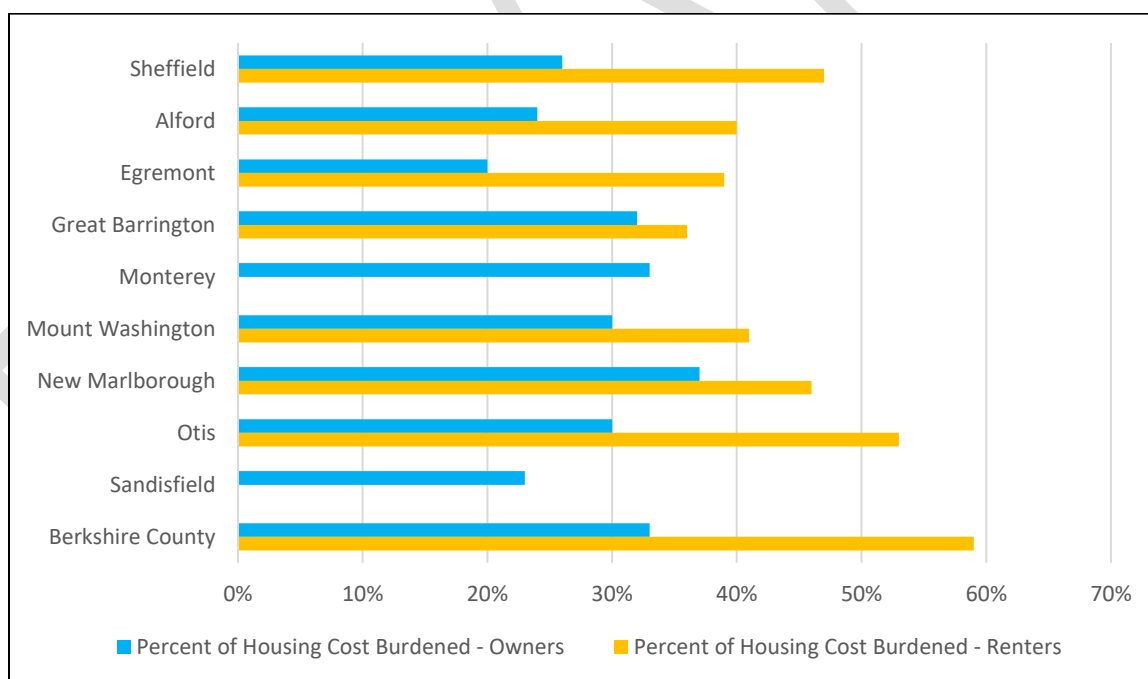
Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Sheffield renter householders were cost burdened. This figure is significant because it is a higher rate than all other southern Berkshire County towns and higher than the rate for the County as a whole. Similarly, 33% of Sheffield's homeowners experience housing cost burden, which is slightly higher than the average for other towns in southern Berkshire County. The only town in southern Berkshire County where a higher percentage of homeowners experienced a cost burden was in Great Barrington (37%).

Table 2.22 - Southern Berkshire County: Housing Cost Burden

Municipality	Number of Rental Households	Renters Burdened	Percent Renters Burdened	Number of Owner Households	Owners Burdened	Percent Owners Burdened
Sheffield	219	128	59%	1,165	386	33%
Alford	7	0	0%	191	43	23%
Egremont	102	54	53%	512	153	30%
Great Barrington	897	416	46%	1,916	698	37%
Monterey	46	19	41%	316	93	30%
Mount Washington	8	0	0%	78	26	33%
New Marlborough	81	29	36%	602	192	32%
Otis	96	37	39%	595	106	20%
Sandisfield	5	2	40%	348	83	24%
Berkshire County	16,885	8,014	47%	37,928	9,891	26%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Tables DP04, S2503

Figure 2.3 - Southern Berkshire County: Prevalence of Housing Cost Burden



Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S2503

2.6 Affordable Housing Supply Analysis

This section explores the affordability of housing for Sheffield residents and the availability of housing at different price points within the municipality. This is achieved by categorizing the municipality's population based on their annual income, calculating affordable housing costs for each category, and estimating the number of housing units available at, or below, these affordable cost thresholds.

Table 2.23 defines the five income categories Sheffield's population is divided into. Note that these categories do not comprise Sheffield's entire population, but only those households which make up to 120% of the area median income (AMI); those households at 121% of AMI, or above a \$80,801 income (730 households) are not included. Also note that as Sheffield's average household size is approximately two people, the AMI for a two-person household has been used.

Table 2.23 Definition of Income Categories

Income Category	Percent of Area Median Income	Income Range
Middle Income	101% - 120%	\$67,334 - \$80,800
Moderate Income	81% - 100%	\$53,867 - \$67,333
Low Income	51% - 80%	\$33,668 - \$53,866
Very Low Income	30% - 50%	\$20,201 - \$33,667
Extremely Low Income	Under 30%	\$20,200 and below

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2021 income limits

Table 2.24 estimates the number of Sheffield households that are in each income category based on the income categories described in table 2.23.

Table 2.24 Affordable Housing Supply Analysis

Income Category	Sheffield Households
Middle Income	88
Moderate Income	76
Low Income	182
Very Low Income	171
Extremely Low Income	137

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Housing costs are considered affordable if they account for 30% or less of a household's income. Table 2.25 defines the maximum affordable housing cost for each income category by calculating 30% of each income category's maximum monthly income.

Table 2.25 Affordable Monthly Housing Costs

Income Category	Sheffield Households
Middle Income	\$1,684 - \$2,020
Moderate Income	\$1,348 - \$1,683
Low Income	\$843 - \$1,347
Very Low Income	\$506 - \$842
Extremely Low Income	\$505 and below

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Table 2.26 and Figure 2.4 show Sheffield housing units at different affordable cost brackets and compare this distribution to the number of households in the associated income categories.

The number of existing housing units is calculated by estimating the number of rental and homeowner units with monthly costs that fell within each affordable monthly housing cost range. Note that "existing" should not be confused with "available", as the units in this analysis are occupied and not on the market.

Also, although housing units with monthly costs below the affordable range for any given income segment would clearly be affordable for that segment – for example housing units with monthly costs falling in the affordable monthly housing cost range for extremely low income households would obviously be affordable for middle income households – for the purpose of this analysis, only units that fall within the boundaries of the affordable monthly housing cost range for any one income category are considered.

As can be seen from the table and chart below, the distribution of Sheffield housing unit costs is greater than the availability of household income in every income category except for the extremely low income segment, where there is a lack of units relative to households.

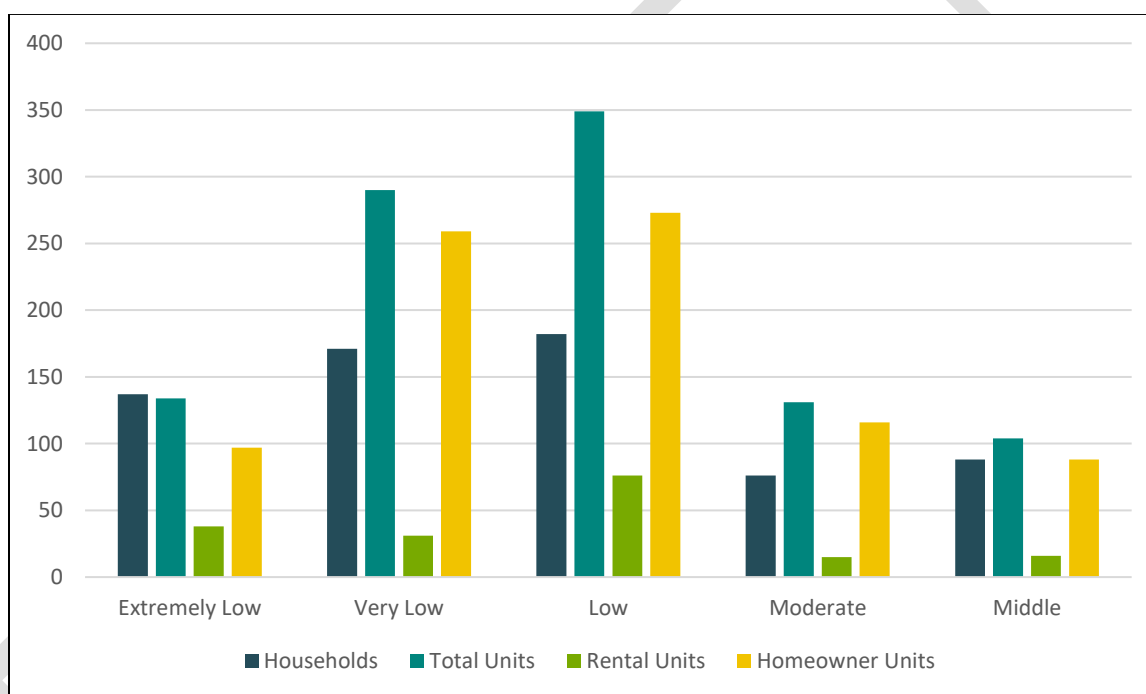
Additionally, while it appears there is adequate housing, the majority of housing is composed of homeowner units, with few rental units available, especially in the moderate and middle income cost brackets.

Table 2.26 - Sheffield: Housing Cost Distribution

Income Category	Sheffield Households	Rental Units within Cost Bracket	Homeowner Units within Cost Bracket	Total Housing Units within Cost Bracket	Difference
Middle	88	16	88	104	+16
Moderate	76	15	116	131	+55
Low	182	76	273	349	+167
Very Low	171	31	259	290	+119
Extremely Low	137	38	97	134	-3

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Figure 2.4 - Sheffield: Housing Cost Distribution



Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Table 2.27 shows existing affordable housing units in Sheffield for each of the income category. While the data is largely the same as in the above paragraphs, the key difference is that now each income category encompasses those below it.

For instance, the number of households in the very low income segment also includes those in the extremely low income segment. This methodology is the same for the number of affordable rental units, affordable homeowner units, and total affordable units. This has been done to calculate a difference column that more accurately represents the surplus or deficit of affordable

housing units for households earning at, or below, a certain income limit. This is necessary to avoid overstating the existence of affordable units for a given income segment by failing to account for housing needs of households in lower income segments.

For every income category except the extremely low income segment, there exists a sizable surplus of affordable housing units in Sheffield, at least on paper. Additionally, for each higher income segment, the surplus increases, indicating that a household's ease of finding affordable housing in Sheffield is positively, and negatively, correlated to its income.

Table 2.27 - Sheffield: Housing Affordability

Income Category	Sheffield Households	Affordable Rental Units	Affordable Homeowner Units	Total Affordable Units	Difference
Middle	654	175	833	1,009	+354
Moderate	566	159	745	904	+339
Low	490	145	629	773	+284
Very Low	308	69	355	424	+116
Extremely Low	137	38	97	134	-3

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) used the 2010 Decennial Census data to tally year-round housing units. Sheffield had 1,507 year-round units that year and only 30 of them are on the subsidized housing inventory from DHCD. This means only 2% of the housing stock are considered affordable housing units. This is under the 10% threshold which is mandated by the state. Municipalities have little power to deny 40B development if they are under the 10% threshold. This means that developers can bypass some local planning and zoning regulations if at least 20% of the units they build are deemed affordable. In Massachusetts, more than 80% of cities and towns do not exceed 10% affordable units.

Conclusions and Implications

The key takeaways from this section are that Sheffield's population has declined in recent decades and this decline is projected to continue; an additional 23% decline by the year 2040. Beyond the overall decline in population, the population is aging, meaning that the median age has risen over time. Sheffield has the second largest workforce in southern Berkshire County

and experienced high rates of unemployment in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the unemployment rates have drastically reduced throughout the past year. There has been an increase in higher earning households in Sheffield which has contributed to the already limited housing market. Homes in Sheffield tend to be at least 3 bedrooms and sell at high price points. The percentage of cost burdened homeowners is higher in Sheffield than the percentage for Berkshire County as a whole. Unless more affordable homes are developed in Sheffield these trends will continue and living in Sheffield will become even less attainable than it is now. In addition:

- Sheffield has major housing supply and housing cost issues.
- The Town's population is older and aging; those age cohorts needed to provide labor and population viability are less than state averages.
- Sheffield's housing market continues to be a split market, with high-end homes and since COVID-19, few affordable homes or rentals.
- Sheffield has extensive acreage not available for housing, such as land in APRs, for which the development rights have been sold, or federal, state, town, or private land in conservancy organizations.
- Buildable land is limited. Land required for a home varies from ½ acre to 4 acres depending on the District.
- Land is expensive in Sheffield, relative to mid-and north-Berkshire County and many parts of Columbia County, NY. Sheffield has had 1 subdivision – Glennanna Way; no 40B overtures to date; and no buildings, such as an old or former school, mills, or town building to reclaim and build into apartments, condos, or other living spaces.
- Sheffield has no sewage system, and a private water company serving a limited area of Sheffield, none of Ashley Falls. All housing units require their own septic and many, outside of the private water company's service area, their own wells. Both limit in-fill possibilities and increase the cost of building.

- Despite Zoning By-Laws encouraging the construction of accessory apartments and another housing units on land, few if any such units have been built.
- Many residents would identify the lack of affordable housing, including rentals, as a main reason Sheffield's young people leave town; Sheffield has a lower than average percentage of 21-40 year-olds.
- Since COVID-19, housing costs have risen substantially, and many homes are being bought by out-of-towners or second homeowners. It is too early to say if this is a trend or a temporary reaction to COVID-19.

DRAFT

3. Rental Housing Conditions

The occupied Sheffield housing stock was composed of 16% renter-occupied units and 84% owner-occupied units. Between 2010 and 2019, the share of renter-occupied units decreased by 33% while owner-occupied units increased by 11%. At the same time, the number of total occupied units decreased by 9% or 141 units.

Table 3.1 - Sheffield: Percentage of Renter-Occupied vs. Homeowner-Occupied Housing (2010 - 2019)

Housing Type	Percent of Occupied Units (2010)	Percent of Occupied Units (2019)	Percent Change
Owner-Occupied	76%	84%	+11%
Renter-Occupied	24%	16%	-33%
Total Occupied Units	1,525	1,384	-9%

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table S2504

Thirty-six percent (36%) of renter-occupied units in Sheffield were located in single-family, detached structures and 39% were located in structures with two to four units; the remaining 25% are in structures with between 5 and 9 apartments. Between 2010 and 2019, structures with 2 units decreased by 90% while all other categories experienced increase over the same time period.

3.1 Overview of Rental Units

Table 3.2 - Sheffield: Rental Units of Each Building Type (2010 - 2019)

Building Type	Percent of Occupied Units 2010	Percent of Occupied Units 2019	Percent Change
1 unit, detached	26.8%	36.1%	+35%
1 unit, attached	0.0%	0.0%	-
2 apartments	39.3%	4.1%	-90%
3 or 4 apartments	16.0%	38.8%	+143%
5 to 9 apartments	6.5%	8.7%	+34%
10 or more apartments	11.4%	12.3%	+8%
Mobile home or other type of housing	0.0%	0.0%	-

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table S2504

Of the 219 occupied rental units in Sheffield, only 5%, or 10 units, have been built since 2000. The vast majority of occupied rental units were built prior to 1980 (89%) and are in structures that are thirty years old or more. Older homes, and rental units, tend to be more expensive to maintain and heat, especially if routine maintenance has been neglected in previous decades. Older homes are also more likely to contain toxins, such as lead and asbestos. It is common for rental tenants to pay for all utilities, in addition to their monthly rent.

Table 3.3 - Sheffield: Age of Renter-Occupied Housing

Year Rental Unit Built	Number of Units	Percent of Renter-occupied Units
Built 2014 or later	0	0%
Built 2010 to 2013	0	0%
Built 2000 to 2009	10	5%
Built 1990 to 1999	9	4%
Built 1980 to 1989	8	4%
Built 1970 to 1979	41	19%
Built 1960 to 1969	10	5%
Built 1950 to 1959	43	20%
Built 1940 to 1949	34	16%
Built 1939 or earlier	64	29%
Total Units	219	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25036

As shown in Table 2.19, renter households tended to have shorter housing tenures compared to owner-occupied households, with 83% having moved into their homes after 2009. The following table shows when renters moved into their homes.

Table 3.4 - Sheffield: Household Tenure for Renters

Year Renter Moved In	Number of Renters	Percent of Total Renters
Moved in 2017 or later	83	38%
Moved in 2015 to 2016	32	15%
Moved in 2010 to 2014	65	30%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	20	9%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	9	4%
Moved in 1989 or earlier	10	5%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25038

Recent estimates from www.airdna.co show 41 active short-term rentals in the 01257 zip code which is primarily Sheffield, while others have the 01230 zip code. Of the available rentals listed through either Airbnb or Vrbo, 78% were rentals for an entire home. The remaining 22% were for private rooms. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the available rentals are for 3-bedroom homes and the average number of guests is seven.

The most recent report from the Department of Revenue (accessed 8/4/21) shows a total of 39 short-term rentals in Sheffield. This number includes the following categories: short-term rentals (such as Airbnb), hotels, Bed and Breakfast Establishments, and lodging houses. Of all the categories, 85% are considered “short-term rentals” by the Department of Revenue.

A note about room occupancy tax:

Massachusetts has a state room occupancy excise tax rate of 5.7%. Depending on the city or town, a local option room occupancy tax and other taxes and fees may also apply. The room occupancy excise tax applies to room rentals of 90 days or less in hotels, motels, bed and breakfast establishments, and lodging houses. Beginning July 1, 2019, the room occupancy excise also applies to short-term rentals of property for 31 days or less.

For all types of rental accommodations, if the total amount of rent is less than \$15 per day, no tax is due. Generally, the room occupancy excise is collected and paid to DOR by a person or business called an operator. As of July 1, 2019, new rules require an intermediary or other agent collecting rent to file returns and pay taxes to DOR. All operators and intermediaries must register with DOR on [MassTaxConnect](https://dorsystemconnect.com).

For Fiscal Year 2021, Sheffield received \$72,966 from the local rooms tax option.¹¹

¹¹ https://dorsystemconnect.com/reports/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=Local_Option_Meals_Rooms

Table 3.5 - Sheffield: Rental Vacancy Rate (2010 - 2019)

Rental Vacancy Rate	2010 ACS	2019 ACS
Total vacant rental units	73 units	27 units
Rental vacancy rate	16.5%	11%

Source: 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey Table B25004, DP04

3.2 Rental Cost Analysis

Forty-two percent (42%) of Sheffield renter households earned less than \$25,000; 31% earned between \$25,000 and \$49,999; 6% earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999; and 20% earned \$75,000 or more.

Table 3.6 - Sheffield: Renter Household Income

Household Income	Number of Renter-occupied Households (2019 ACS)	Percent of Total Renter-occupied Households
Less than \$5,000	28	13%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	0	0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	26	12%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	9	4%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	29	13%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	18	8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	51	23%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14	6%
\$75,000 to \$99,000	13	6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	31	14%
\$150,000 or more	0	0%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Tables B25118

Ninety-five percent (95%) of Sheffield renter households paid some cash rent, rather than providing some services in lieu of cash rent. Fifty-eight percent (58%) paid less than \$1,000 per month, 24% paid between \$1,000 and \$1,999 per month, and 17% paid \$2,000 or more per month. The median monthly rent paid was \$968.

Table 3.7 - Sheffield: Monthly Housing Costs for Renters

Monthly Housing Costs	Total Renter-Occupied Households	Percent
Less than \$500	37	17.7%
\$500 to \$999	84	40.2%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	30	14.4%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	23	11.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	35	16.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$968	-
No rent paid	10	4.6%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

Between 2010 and 2019, Sheffield renter households paid more in rent. In 2010, it was estimated that no rental households in Sheffield paid over \$1,500 but by 2019 that number had increased to 58 households.

Table 3.8 - Sheffield: Change in Gross Rent Paid (2010 - 2019)

Gross Rent	Number of Renters (2010)	Number of Renters (2019)	Percent Change
No Rent Paid	43	10	-77%
\$1 to \$499	54	37	-31%
\$500 to \$999	236	84	-64%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	36	30	-17%
\$1,500 or more	0	58	-

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

The most cost burdened age cohort of Sheffield's renter householders was the 25-34 age cohort, in which *all* of householders were cost burdened (57 renters). Of the cohort age 65 and over, 42% of renters experienced housing cost burden (26 renters).

Table 3.9 - Sheffield: Age of Rental Householder Paying 30% or More for Rent

Age of Rental Householder	Number of Renters Paying 30-34.9% of Income in Rent	Number of Renters Paying 35%+ of Income in Rent	Percent of Renters Paying 30%+ of Income in Rent*
15-24 years old	0	0	-
25-34 years old	31	26	100%
35-64 years old	11	34	45%
65+ years old	9	17	42%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25072

*These percentages represent the percent of renters by age cohort, not a percent of total renters.

3.3 Affordable Rental Housing Stock

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) estimated Sheffield had 30 subsidized rental units, representing 14% of the total renter-occupied housing stock.

Table 3.10 - Sheffield: Subsidized Rental Housing Stock

Subsidized Rental Housing Stock	Number of Units	Percent of Renter-occupied Units
Renter-occupied Units (2019 ACS)	219	100%
Subsidized Rentals (DHCD 2020 SHI)	30	14%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S2504; Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Subsidized Housing Inventory as of 12/21/2020

An indicator of need is an increase of more than 50% in median market rents. Between 2010 and 2019, the median gross rent in Sheffield increased by 32%. This was a greater change than the increases of 22% and 27% for Berkshire County and Massachusetts, respectively. However, while Sheffield's median rent of \$968 was below that of Massachusetts, it was higher than that of Berkshire County.

Table 3.11 - Sheffield, Berkshire County, and Massachusetts: Rental Expense (2010 - 2019)

Municipality	Median Rent 2010	Median Rent 2019	Percent Change
Sheffield	\$735	\$968	+32%
Berkshire County	\$715	\$872	+22%
Massachusetts	\$1,006	\$1,282	+27%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

As of July 2021, there were no rental units in Sheffield listed on Zillow.com or Craigslist.com. These two sites are not the only means of finding rental housing opportunities, but they provide an indication of how limited rental housing in Sheffield was as of this date.

An indicator of need is when more than 50% of renters pay at least 30% of their income in rent. In Sheffield in 2019, 61% of renter households were considered cost burdened.

Table 3.12 - Sheffield: Rent as a Percentage of Income (2010 - 2019)

Rents as a Percentage of Income	2010 ACS	Percent of Total (2010 ACS)	2019 ACS	Percent of Total (2019 ACS)
Occupied units paying rent	326	100%	209	100%
Paying 30% or more of income in rent	184	56%	128	61%

Source: 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04

Another major indicator of housing costs to affordability is to compare the median-cost rental in a municipality to what is 30% of a municipality's average wage; any number above this 30% indicates rental costs are not affordable. The median rental amount is subtracted from the affordable rent to reach the affordability gap. As shown in Table 3.13, Sheffield as a municipality does not demonstrate need by this first indicator, as the affordable rent at 30% of income is higher than the median gross income for all jobs, service-providing jobs, and goods-producing jobs. The affordability gap for all job types is positive.

Table 3.13 - Sheffield: Rent Compared to Local Wages

Job Type	Average Monthly Wage	Affordable Rent at 30% of Income	Median Gross Rent	Affordability Gap
All Jobs	\$957 x 4 weeks = \$3,828	\$1,148	\$968	\$180
Service-Providing Jobs	\$856 x 4 weeks = \$3,424	\$1,027	\$968	\$59
Goods-Producing Jobs	\$1,225 x 4 weeks = \$4,896	\$1,469	\$968	\$501

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table DP04; 2019 Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development ES-202 Annual Report

<https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/lmi/EmploymentAndWages/EAWResult?A=05&GA=000392&Y=2019&P=00&O=00&I=10~0&Iopt=2&Dopt=TEXT>

Note: A positive affordability gap indicates that the affordable rent at 30% of income is higher than the median gross rent, and a negative affordability gap indicates the opposite

Conclusions and Implications

The most common type of housing structure containing apartments in Sheffield were structures with three or four apartments (39%). Few rental units have been built in the last twenty years – only 5% of the total rental units. A quick search on Zillow.com and Craigslist.com yields no available rentals which demonstrates how limited rental housing options are in Sheffield. To combat some of the negative trends shown earlier in this assessment, such as an aging population, more rental options need to be available. This will attract younger people and families of modest means who cannot afford to buy a home in Sheffield. In addition:

- Few if any new rentals are on the market; the available supply is limited and expensive.
- Sheffield has one affordable housing/Section 8 housing development -Dewey Court; it is managed by the Great Barrington Housing Committee. Sheffield is well below the state target of 10% affordable units
- The financial burdens of renting have risen, denying many renters the likely ability to have financial security.
- Former rental stock is being taken off the market, possible for home ownership or sale or use as seasonal or short-term rentals.

4. Owner Housing Conditions

In both 2010 and 2019, the vast majority of Sheffield's homeownership housing stock was single-family residences (95%). The remaining homeownership housing stock was in 2-4 unit structures (1%), 3-4 unit structures (1%), and mobile homes (2%).

Table 4.1 - Sheffield: Building Type of Owner-Occupied Housing Units (2010 - 2019)

Building Type	2010 ACS	2019 ACS	Percent of Total (2019 ACS)	Percent Change
Single-Family Detached	1,139	1,085	93%	-5%
Single-Family Attached	0	29	2%	-
2 Units	0	20	1%	-
3 or 4 Units	0	9	1%	-
5-9 Units	0	0	0%	-
10-19 Units	0	0	0%	-
20-49 Units	0	0	0%	-
50+ Units	0	0	0%	-
Mobile Home	17	22	2%	+29%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0	0%	-
Owner-occupied Units	1,156	1,165	100%	+1%

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey Table B25032

4.1 Homes for Sale

As of July 2021, there were 20 homes listed for sale in Sheffield found on www.Zillow.com which ranged in price from \$216,700 to \$11,890,000. Additionally, there were ten buildable lots available for purchase. One of the total 20 active listings was in excess of \$11,000,000. When this outlying property is removed from the equation, the average listed price for a home was \$530,311 and the median listed price was \$502,500.

Table 4.2 - Sheffield: Homes Listed for Sale (July, 2021)

Address	Number of Bedrooms	List Price
356 Miller Ave	3	\$449,000
305 S. Undermountain Rd	3	\$635,000
42 Ok St.	2	\$395,000
347 S. Undermountain Rd.	3	\$495,000
246 County Rd.	3	\$795,000
181 Hulett Hill Rd.	3	\$595,000
793 Salisbury Rd.	3	\$715,000
59 Main St.	9	\$875,000
2080 S. Undermountain Rd.	11	\$11,890,000
481 Shunpike Rd.	1	\$995,000
52 Cedar St.	3	\$219,900
119 Main St.	6	\$525,000
169 Ashley Falls Rd.	3	\$599,000
41 S. Main St.	3	\$359,000
25 S. Main St.	4	\$510,000
28 Ashley Falls Rd.	3	\$399,000
254 S. Undermountain Rd.	10	\$493,000
119 S. Main St.	6	\$525,000
1602 Hewins St.	2	\$216,700
194 Main St.	5	\$280,300

Source: Zillow.com accessed on 7/30/2021

Table 4.3 - Sheffield: Listed Homes by Number of Bedrooms (July, 2021)

Number of Bedrooms in Home	Number of Homes Listed	Average List Price
11	1	\$11,890,000
10	1	\$493,000
9	1	\$875,000
6	2	\$525,000
5	1	\$280,300
4	1	\$510,000
3	10	\$526,090
2	2	\$305,850
1	1	\$995,000

Source: Zillow.com accessed on 7/30/2021

The *South Berkshire County, MA - Residential Real Estate Report* from Berkshire Realtors compared real estate metrics from February of 2020 with February of 2021, which showed some of the impacts of COVID-19 on the housing market. The report summary showed increased number of listings, active listing count, and active listing volume and decreased median listing

price and new listing volume. Additionally, homes were staying on the market longer than in February of 2020. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix A.

4.2 Value of Homes

In 2020, the median home price in Sheffield was \$299,000, the median single-family home price was \$365,000, and the median condominium price was not tabulated for that year, as it is not clear Sheffield has any condominiums. These figures were 36% and 46% higher than the respective overall Berkshire County prices.

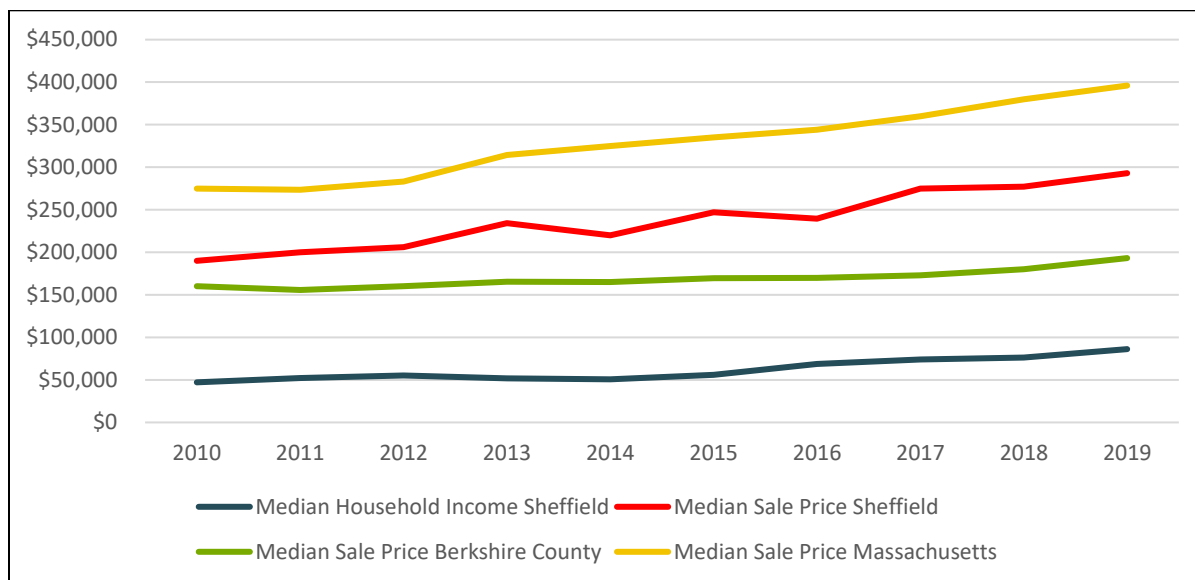
Table 4.4 - Southern Berkshire County: Median Home Value (2020)

Municipality	Median Sales Price: All	Median Sales Price: Single-Family Home	Median Sales Price: Condominium
Sheffield	\$299,000	\$365,000	-
Alford	\$630,000	\$714,000	-
Egremont	\$457,500	\$680,000	-
Great Barrington	\$376,000	\$425,000	\$355,000
Monterey	\$492,000	\$522,000	-
Mount Washington	\$475,000	\$500,000	-
New Marlborough	\$451,500	\$460,000	-
Otis	\$202,450	\$339,999	-
Sandisfield	\$172,100	\$285,500	-
Berkshire County	\$220,000	\$249,450	\$285,000

Source: Banker and Tradesman

Figure 4.1 shows median sales prices from 2010 to 2019 compared to household income. In Sheffield, median household income has increased 83% since 2010 while the median sales price has increased 57% from \$190,000 to \$299,000.

Figure 4.1 - Sheffield: Median Sales Price Compared to Household Income (2010-2019)



Source: Banker and Tradesman, 2010-2019 American Community Survey Table S2503

4.3 Seasonal Housing

The number of seasonal housing units increased by 141% between 1990 and 2018, but it is worth noting that most of this increase came between 1990 and 2010, as the number of seasonal housing units increased by only 4% between 2010 and 2018.

Seasonal Vacant Units. Seasonal housing units are those intended for occupancy only during certain seasons of the year and are found primarily in resort areas. Housing units held for occupancy by migratory labor employed in farm work during the crop season are tabulated as seasonal. As of the first quarter 1986, vacant seasonal mobile homes are being counted as a part of the seasonal housing inventory.

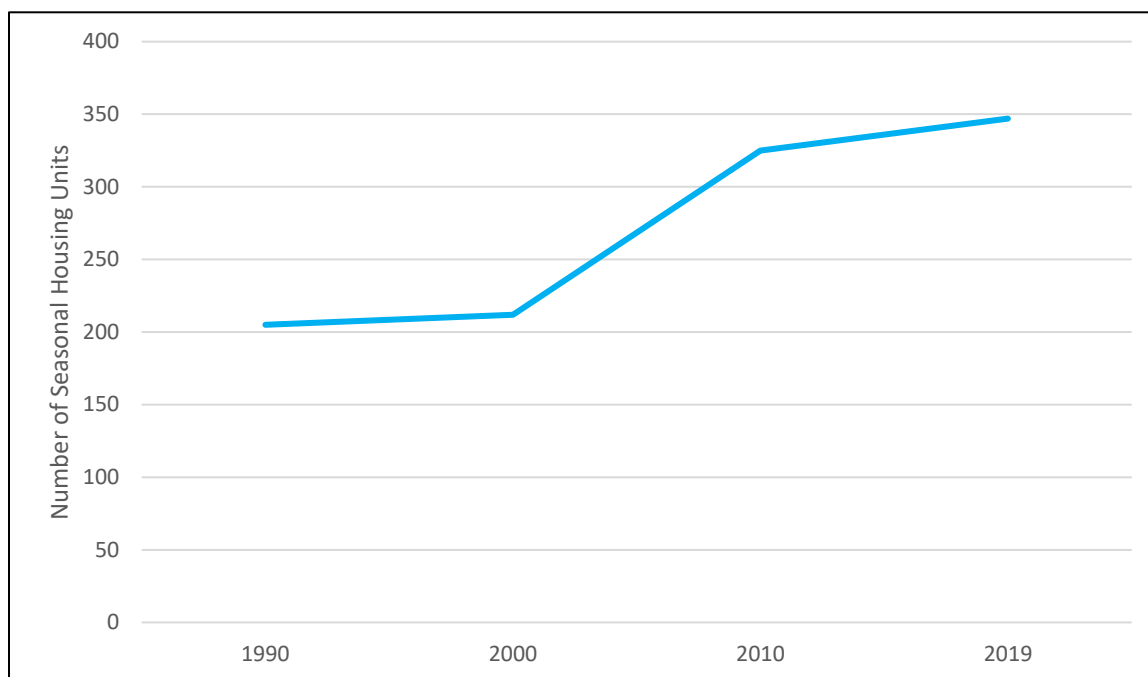
Source: <https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/definitions.pdf>

Table 4.5 - Sheffield: Seasonal Housing (1990 - 2019)

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2019 ACS	Percent Change since 1990	Percent Change since 2010
Number of Units	205	212	325	347	+69%	+7%

Source: 1990, 2000, <https://www.nhgis.org/> ; 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey Table B25004

Figure 4.2. - Sheffield: Seasonal Housing (1990 - 2019)



Source: 1990, 2000, 2010 Decennial Census Table SF1; 2019 American Community Survey Table B25004

4.4 Affordability of Home Ownership

Table 4.6 uses the median household income of Sheffield and the surrounding municipalities to derive an affordable home price for each municipality; this affordable home price for each municipality is then compared to the median sales price of a home in each municipality.

The affordable home price is calculated using a utility provided by Nerdwallet.com, and the input parameters are as follows: a target debt-to-income ratio of 30%, a 30-year loan term, a credit score between 690 and 719, and minimum monthly debt payments of \$500. Additionally, the utility generated the following assumptions based on the municipality: property taxes of 1.18% (\$348 a month/\$4,176 a year), and homeowners' insurance of \$96 a month/\$1,152 a year. The median sales price is then subtracted from the affordable price to get the affordability gap. A positive affordability gap indicates that the median sale price is below the affordable price, and a negative affordability gap indicates that the median sales price is above the affordable price. Sheffield had a positive affordability gap of \$54,540. This was much higher than all of the

surrounding municipalities listed in Table 4.6, which had negative affordability gaps of greater than \$100,000. Furthermore, this was in contrast to Berkshire County, which had a negative affordability gap of \$19,294. This, however, may be skewed by the number of households reporting incomes greater than \$100,000. At main income levels, it is clear that an affordability gap exists. Housing/rental affordability depends on one's household income, not the median income. With median income calculations, 50% of household incomes are below this level, while 50% are above. Affordability depends on each household's income, not their position relative to median household income.

Table 4.6 - Southern Berkshire County: Affordability of Homes

Municipality	Median Household Income	Affordable Price	Median Sale Price	Affordability Gap
Sheffield	\$86,184	\$353,540	\$299,000	+\$54,540
Alford	\$106,667	\$469,982	\$630,000	-\$160,018
Egremont	\$71,528	\$270,438	\$457,500	-\$187,062
Great Barrington	\$55,478	\$179,432	\$376,000	-\$196,568
Monterey	\$79,038	\$313,021	\$492,000	-\$178,979
Mount Washington	\$66,250	\$240,511	\$475,000	-\$234,489
New Marlborough	\$71,250	\$268,861	\$451,500	-\$182,639
Otis	\$87,868	\$310,198	\$202,450	\$107,748
Sandisfield	\$71,023	\$363,088	\$172,100	\$190,988
Berkshire County	\$59,230	\$200,706	\$220,000	-\$19,294

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S1901; Banker and Tradesman; Nerdwallet.com house affordability calculator <https://www.nerdwallet.com/mortgages/how-much-house-can-i-afford/calculate-affordability>

Note: A positive affordability gap indicates that the affordable price is higher than the median sales price, and a negative affordability gap indicates the opposite.

In 2010, 54% of Sheffield homeowner households with a mortgage paid more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. By 2019, this share had increased to 61% for all housing units with a mortgage.

Table 4.7 - Sheffield: Mortgage Status by Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income (2010 - 2019)

Percent of Income Paid Towards Housing Costs	2010	2019	Percent of Total (2019)	Percent Change
Less than 10.0 percent	41	97	6%	+137%
10.0 to 14.9 percent	79	94	11%	+19%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	109	63	15%	-42%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	89	126	12%	+42%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	51	47	7%	-8%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	74	72	10%	-3%
35.0 to 39.9 percent	85	19	12%	-78%
40.0 to 49.9 percent	100	93	14%	-7%
50.0 percent or more	179	105	25%	-41%
Not computed	0	0	0%	-
Housing Units with a Mortgage	807	716	-	-11%

Source: 2010, 2019 American Community Survey B25091

Seven percent (7%) of Sheffield owner-occupied households earned less than \$25,000, 20% earned between \$25,000 and \$49,999, 11% earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999, and 63% earned \$75,000 or more.

Table 4.8 - Sheffield: Household Incomes of Householders

Household Income	Number of Renter-occupied Households	Percent of Total Renter-occupied Households
Less than \$5,000	0	0%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	31	3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	22	2%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	11	1%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	9	1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	147	13%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	87	7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	127	11%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	182	16%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	287	25%
\$150,000 or more	262	22%
Total	1,165	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25118

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 calculate the monthly mortgage payments needed at various interest rates, along with a 10% or 20% down payment to purchase a home at the Sheffield median sale price found in Table 4.6. The tables then estimate the percent of renter households in Sheffield who could afford these payments without incurring a housing cost burden, that is paying more than 30% of household income in payments.

The monthly mortgage payment is calculated using a utility provided by Zillow.com, and the input parameters are as follows: 30-year fixed loan program, 1.18% property tax rate (taken from Nerdwallet.com utility used for Table 4.6), and \$1,152 in annual home insurance costs (taken from Nerdwallet.com utility used for Table 4.6)

The monthly income needed to afford the payment without incurring a housing cost burden is calculated by dividing the monthly mortgage payment by 30% to find the income level at which the payment would equal only 30%.

The percent of Sheffield renters who could afford the mortgage payment is found by estimating how many renter households have monthly incomes greater than the monthly income needed to afford the payment without incurring a housing cost burden.

Table 4.9 - Sheffield: Mortgage Payment Affordability with 10% Down Payment

Interest Rate	Monthly mortgage payment	Monthly income needed to afford payment without housing cost burden	Percent of Sheffield renters who can afford
2%	\$1,517	\$5,057	23.7%
3%	\$1,657	\$5,523	22.4%
4%	\$1,807	\$6,023	21.0%
5%	\$1,967	\$6,557	19.2%
6%	\$2,136	\$7,120	17.8%
7%	\$2,313	\$7,710	16.0%
8%	\$2,497	\$8,323	14.2%

Source: Zillow.com mortgage payment calculator <https://www.zillow.com/mortgage-calculator/>; 2019 American Community Survey B25118, Banker & Tradesman

Table 4.10 - Sheffield: Mortgage Payment Affordability with 20% Down Payment

Interest Rate	Monthly mortgage payment	Monthly income needed to afford payment without housing cost burden	Percent of Sheffield renters who can afford
2%	\$1,274	\$4,247	26.0%
3%	\$1,398	\$4,660	25.1%
4%	\$1,532	\$5,107	23.7%
5%	\$1,674	\$5,580	22.4%
6%	\$1,824	\$6,080	20.6%
7%	\$1,981	\$6,603	19.2%
8%	\$2,145	\$7,150	17.4%

Source: Zillow.com mortgage payment calculator <https://www.zillow.com/mortgage-calculator/>; 2019 American Community Survey B25118, Banker & Tradesman

Conclusions and Implications

There is a discrepancy between the estimated median home sale price from Banker and Tradesman (\$299,000) and the median home sale price found on Zillow.com of homes that are currently listed (\$502,500). Since the information from Zillow.com uses active listings, this will be the focus of this summary. Most of the active listings are in excess of \$400,000 which greatly limits prospective home buyers. However, there are thirty homes that are part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's subsidized housing inventory. This shows that there are some affordable homes in Sheffield but only about 2% of the total housing stock. Being under the date mandated 10% affordable units makes the Town vulnerable to unfriendly 40B development.

- Much of Sheffield's housing stock is older, 50years+ in age, and likely in need of some level of repair.
- Few if any homes are being built other than for individual usage and these tend to be "high-end" homes; many of these are being built by 2nd homeowners or new retirees to the area.
- The number of homes for sale has dropped substantially with few homes priced in the middle range. During COVID-19, homes have been bought unseen and for over asking price. It is unclear if this price increase and buying behavior will continue.

- The financial burdens of homeowners have risen, denying many homeowners the likely ability to have financial security.
- 40% of Sheffield residents are classified as Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) making self-funding of an accessory apartment or home unlikely without financial assistance.
- There are no mechanisms in Sheffield, such as the CPA, Housing Trust, Housing Authority, etc. to provide management and/or financial support increasing the Town's available housing/rental stock.

DRAFT

5. Senior Housing Profile and Need

In 2019, there was a total of 876 residents age 65 and over. Of this age cohort, 590 residents were householders. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of these householders were homeowners and the remaining 11% were renters.

Table 5.1 - Sheffield: Age Distribution of Senior Householders by Home Type

Householder Age	Number of Renters	Percent of Total Seniors	Number of Owners	Percent of Total Seniors
65-74 years old	44	5%	330	38%
75-84 years old	0	0%	136	16%
85 years old and older	19	2%	61	7%
Total	63	7%	527	60%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25007, 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05

The population age 65 and over increased by 47% between 2010 and 2019 and is projected to grow an additional 33% over 2019 levels by 2035. This will result in the 65 and over age cohort comprising 45% of Sheffield's total population.

Table 5.2 - Sheffield: Senior Population and Projections (2010 - 2035)

Age Group	2010 ACS	2019 ACS	2035 Population Projections	Percent of Total Population (2035)	Percent Change 2019 - 2035
65-74 years old	328	562	578	22%	+3%
75-84 years old	192	167	406	16%	+143%
85 years old and older	74	147	186	7%	+27%
Total	594	876	1,169	45%	+33%

Source: 2010 United States Decennial Census Table SF1; 2019 American Community Survey Table DP05; UMASS Donahue Institute Population Projections

Nine (9%) of Sheffield senior households earned less than \$25,000; 19% earned between \$25,000 and \$49,999; 4% earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999; 35% earned \$75,000 or more; and 31% had incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Table 5.3 - Sheffield: Household Incomes of Senior Households

Income & Benefits	2019	Percent of Total Seniors
Less than \$10,000	27	3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	18	2%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	20	2%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	18	2%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	60	7%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	19	2%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	34	4%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	27	3%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	22	3%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	12	1%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	29	3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	37	4%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	40	5%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	115	13%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	32	4%
\$200,000 or more	80	9%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B19037

The National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care (NIC) provided a grant to NORC at the University of Chicago¹² to fund research on senior housing. The resulting report, *The Forgotten Middle: Many Middle-Income Seniors Will Have Insufficient Resources For Housing And Health Care*¹³, focuses on baby boomers who, when age of 75 and older, will neither qualify for Medicaid nor be able to afford today's private-pay seniors housing and care options. The minimum amount that such a senior will need in order to afford assisted living as it is priced today, as well as out-of-pocket medical expenses is \$60,000. Here are a few key findings:

- The number of middle-income seniors will nearly double to 14.4 million by 2029 (43% of all seniors)
- Seniors will be more diverse and more educated than today's senior cohorts

¹² "the nonpartisan and objective research organization NORC and the University of Chicago"

¹³ <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05233>

- 67% will have 3 or more chronic conditions
- 60% will have mobility limitations
- 20% will be defined as “high needs”
- 7.8 million (54%) will have less than \$60,000 annual financial resources, even when including housing equity. This group grows to 11.6 million (81%) when excluding housing equity.¹⁴

Currently, in Massachusetts, a single-person household must have an annual income of \$16,971 or less to be eligible for Medicaid; a two-person household must have an annual income of \$22,930 or less to be eligible. Medicaid can provide long-term care for seniors who earn low income, but there is a large gap between those who earn income low enough to be eligible and the number of seniors who can pay for out-of-pocket medical expenses. In this regard, the “forgotten middle” are currently seniors earning between \$16,972 and \$60,000 annually. In Sheffield, an estimated 174 seniors would be in this income category, which comprises 20% of the total senior population.

Senior homeowners in Sheffield are likely to have longer housing tenures, with 52% having moved into their homes before 1990 and 66% having moved into their homes before 2000. In today’s housing market, long tenure likely means appreciated home values. Most senior renters (56%) moved into their homes since 2015.

¹⁴ <https://www.nic.org/blog/health-affairs-launches-the-forgotten-middle/>

Table 5.4 - Sheffield: Tenure by Year Senior Householder

Year Moved into Home	Number of Renters	Percent of Senior Renters	Number of Owners	Percent of Senior Owners
2017 or later	17	27%	60	11%
2015 to 2016	18	29%	10	2%
2010 to 2014	0	0%	0	0%
2000 to 2009	9	14%	112	21%
1990 to 1999	9	14%	72	14%
1989 or earlier	10	16%	273	52%
Total	63	100%	527	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25128

In 2019, forty-one percent (41%) of Sheffield renter households were cost burdened, which compares with 51% of senior renter households in Berkshire County.

Table 5.5 - Sheffield: Percentage of Senior Renters' Income Spent on Housing Costs

Senior Renters' Income Spent on Housing Costs	2019	Percent
Number paying 30% or more of income in rent	26	41%
Total Senior (65+ years) renters	63	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25072

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of Sheffield senior homeowner households were cost burdened. This compares with 28% of senior homeowner households in Berkshire County.

Table 5.6 - Sheffield: Percentage of Senior Owners' Income Spent on Housing Costs

Amount Spent on Housing Costs	2019	Percent
Less than 20.0%	293	56%
20.0 to 24.9%	72	14%
25.0 to 29.9%	11	2%
30.0 to 34.9%	24	5%
35.0% or more	127	24%
Not computed	0	0%
Total Senior (65+ years) Owners	527	100%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25093

In Sheffield, 54% of seniors had some disability or limitation. Among these, the most common were hearing difficulties at 16% of seniors, independent living difficulties at 12%, and

ambulatory difficulties at 11% of seniors. There are seniors who have more than one disability or limitation.

Table 5.7 - Sheffield: Seniors with Disabilities or Limitation

Disability or Limitation	2019	Percent of All Seniors
Hearing Difficulty	143	16%
Vision Difficulty	38	4%
Cognitive Difficulty	70	8%
Ambulatory Difficulty	99	11%
Self-Care Difficulty	17	2%
Independent Living Difficulty	107	12%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S1810

Note: The total figure, a sum of the distinct disability categories, may be overstated as some residents may belong to more than one category.

Conclusions and Implications

In Sheffield, almost a third of the total population are senior citizens age 65 and over. This number is projected to increase to approximately 45% of the total population by the year 2035. The vast majority of this age cohort are homeowners (89%). A common trend seen throughout Berkshire County is seniors who want to “age in place” but due to physical limitations cannot maintain their homes so they are forced to relocate. As mentioned earlier in this assessment, most home in Sheffield are 3-bedrooms which is beyond the needs of most seniors. And, there are no current rental options available for seniors who may want to relocate to a smaller, more manageable home. Only 11% of seniors rent homes but out of that population, almost half are cost burdened. Sheffield has adopted several Zoning By-Law amendments to allow for greater housing diversity in town. Current zoning allows for housing options that have currently not been implemented but which could better accommodate seniors and those with special needs.

- Many residents, especially seniors, own their own homes and have done so for years. With increases in home values, it is likely their home may be their major financial asset. However, federal tax laws may make it a financial burden to sell and move into a smaller home, if one were available.

- The financial burdens of homeownership have risen, denying such owners the likely ability to have financial security, especially if a senior is has limited income based primarily on Social Security.
- The Town has been successful in getting Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for LMI owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, covering a variety of home repair needs up to \$40,000 per CDBG round. This same money may also be used for rental units, in certain circumstances.

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6. Special-Needs Housing

Twenty-one percent (21%) of Sheffield residents had some disability or limitation. Among these, the most common were hearing difficulties at 6% of the population and ambulatory difficulties at 5% of the population. Among these, the most common were hearing difficulties at 16% of seniors, in dependent living difficulties, at 12%, and ambulatory difficulties at 11% of seniors. There are seniors who have more than one disability or limitation. These numbers do not include temporary disabilities, such as a broken wrist from a slip on ice or broken ribs from a fall.

Table 6.1 - Sheffield: Residents with Disabilities or Limitations

Disability or Limitation	2019	Percent of Total Population
Hearing Difficulty	196	6%
Vision Difficulty	42	1%
Cognitive Difficulty	125	4%
Ambulatory Difficulty	144	5%
Self-Care Difficulty	29	1%
Independent Living Difficulty	139	4%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table S1810

Note: The total figure, a sum of the distinct disability categories, may be overstated as some residents may belong to more than one category.

Sheffield's housing stock is older and is primarily single-family homes, typically having two floors with stairs. Such housing is likely to be unsuitable for residents with certain special needs, without modifications, retrofitting with some adaptive equipment, and/or restricting living space to the first floor.

Conclusions and Implications

Housing in Sheffield is predominantly 3-bedroom, single family, detached dwellings. Many containing stairs to multiple levels of the home or require living within restrictive spaces, such as first floor. There is a shortage of homes that are ADA compliant which will force some residents to leave Sheffield when their homes are no longer conducive to their needs. This is especially prevalent in the senior population.

- Sheffield has one affordable housing/Section 8 housing development -Dewey Court; it is managed by the Great Barrington Housing Committee. Sheffield is well below the state target of 10% affordable units.
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for LMI owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, covering a variety of home repair needs up to \$40,000 per CDBG round, have address owner-occupied special need renovations.

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7. Foreclosures, Blighted, and Sub-Standard Properties

As of August 2021, there were no foreclosed or pre-foreclosed homes in Sheffield listed on Zillow.com, RealtyTrac.com, and HomePath.com.

Sheffield Town Assessors have assigned an assessed condition for 1,854 residential properties out of the estimated 1,859 accounted for by the 2019 American Community Survey. Additionally, the Assessors have two categories for properties with no description which makes the total property count 2020. As noted in Table 7.1 and Figure 7.1, less than 1% of homes in Sheffield are in *Unsound* condition*.

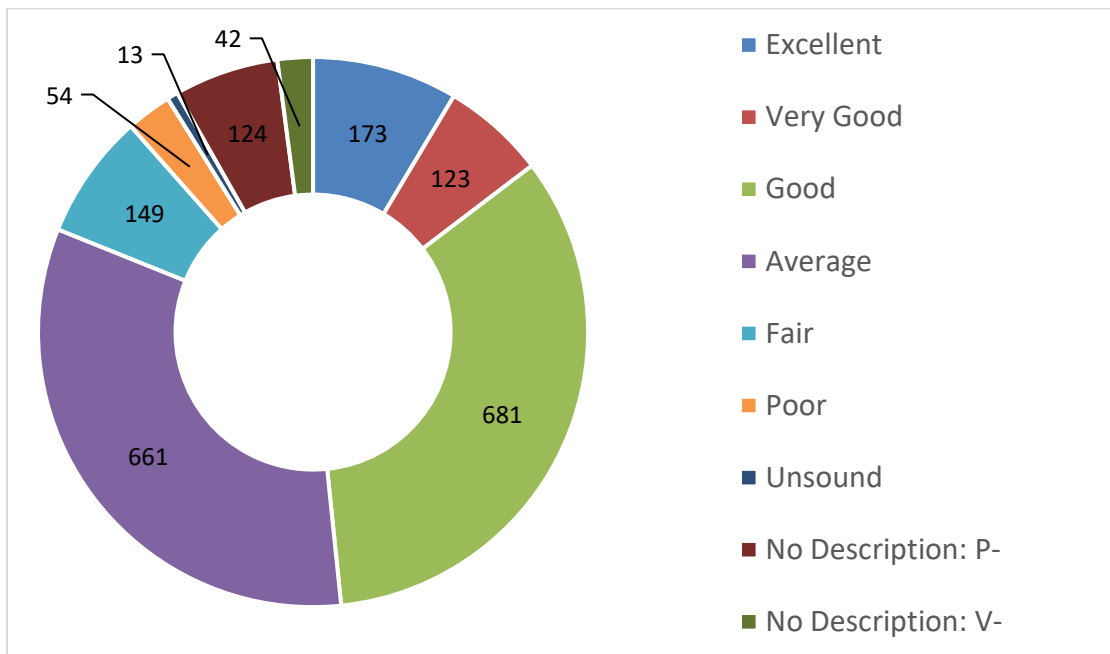
*Grade and condition ranking are entirely subjective and are relative to other homes in Sheffield. For example: *Average* condition is what the Assessor deems “average” for the Town whereas *Fair* and *Poor* would be a lesser condition than what is deemed *Average*.

Table 7.1 - Sheffield: Assessed Property Conditions of Residential Homes

Property Condition	Number of Properties	Percent of Properties
Excellent: EX	173	9%
Very Good: VG	123	6%
Good: GD	681	34%
Average: AV	661	33%
Fair: FR	149	7%
Poor: PR	54	3%
Unsound: UN	13	1%
No Description: P- (poor)	124	6%
No Description: V- (very good)	42	2%
Total	2,020	100%

Source: Sheffield Town Assessors (accessed 8/3/2021)

Figure 7.1 - Sheffield: Assessed Condition of Residential Homes



Source: Sheffield Town Assessors (accessed 8/3/2021)

A property grade refers to the quality of the components within the home. For example, linoleum flooring would have a lower property grade than tile flooring, while a slate roof would have a higher grade than an asphalt shingled roof. The grade of a home generally stays constant, whereas the condition, or property grade, of the home may vary over time. In Sheffield, the most common property grade was a C (37% of homes).

Table 7.2 - Sheffield: Assessed Property Grades of Residential Homes

Property Grade	Number of Properties	Percent of Properties
Superior +: X+	2	0.1%
Superior: X	4	0.2%
Superior -: X-	1	0.05%
Excellent: A+	135	7%
Very Good/Excellent: A	49	2%
Very Good: A-	125	6%
Good/Very Good: B+	36	2%
Good: B	267	13%
Average/Good: B-	318	16%
Above Average: C+	62	3%
Average: C	747	37%
Fair/Average: C-	55	3%
Fair: D+	138	7%
Poor/Fair: D	8	0.4%
Poor: D-	36	2%
Unsound: E	37	2%
Total	2,020	100%

Source: Sheffield Town Assessors (accessed 8/3/2021)

Conclusions and Implications

The majority of homes in Sheffield are either average or good condition. These homes comprise 66% of the assessed homes in town. Conversely, 9% of homes in Sheffield are in either poor or unsound condition. Similar to property condition, 37% of the assessed properties earned an “average” grade (747 properties).

- Sheffield has no blighted property Zoning or General By-Laws
- Sheffield has no school building, mills, or municipal properties for renovation into housing.

8. Seasonal Housing Needs

In 2019, Sheffield's peak employment month was January with 1,636 people employed. The lowest number of employees was recorded in August with 1,437 employed. This contrasts with an increase in Berkshire County employment of 5% over the same period, indicating that seasonal industries are less important to Sheffield's employment than that of Berkshire County as a whole. Furthermore, the Census Bureau tracks seasonal housing units by vacancy rate, which made up 19% of Sheffield's vacant housing stock in 2019.

Table 8.1 - Sheffield and Berkshire County: Seasonal Employment

Seasonal Employment	Sheffield 2019	Berkshire County 2019
January Employment	1,636	59,638
August Employment	1,437	62,690
Percent Change	-12%	5%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development ES-202

<https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/lmi/EmploymentAndWages/EAWResult?A=05&GA=000392&Y=2019&P=00&O=00&I=10~0&Iopt=1&Dopt=TEXT>

Table 8.2 - Sheffield and Berkshire County: Seasonal Housing

Seasonal Housing	Sheffield 2019	Berkshire County 2019
Total Housing Units	1,859	69,079
Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use (vacant)	347	8,551
Percent Seasonal	19%	12%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey Table B25004, DP04

Conclusions and Implications

- Some homes, when purchased, rather than rented or used for the individual's usage, are removed from the long-term rental stock, and rented as vacation rentals and/or short-term rentals (STRs). This assessment identifies 39 such homes.
- The Town assesses a STR tax but has no regulations on STR.

9. Review of Town-Related Housing Efforts

Financial Assistance

Through three different grants, fiscal year '14, fiscal year '16, and fiscal year '19, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) has done twenty housing rehabilitation projects in Sheffield, using approximately \$668,500 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. For fiscal year '14, the Department of Housing and Community Development recognized Great Barrington as the lead for the grant. The Town, in partnership with BRPC, did not submit a 2021 application for housing rehabilitation funding, as BRPC is completing past CDBG grants disrupted by COVID-19.

While not directly related to housing, Sheffield has successfully partnered with BRPC and received CDBG grants for architectural barrier removal at Town Hall (design and construction) and for the Bushnell-Sage Library, Police Station and Town Park restrooms (design). An \$800,000 grant application was just submitted for construction funding to implement the majority of design work done at these three facilities. The focus of this work has been to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for all residents at all Town buildings and properties.

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) has not been adopted by Sheffield voters. The CPA has the potential, if adopted, to provide funds for affordable/workforce housing projects.

Housing Production

The Town is not aware of any new affordable housing units created since 2000. At present, the Town's subsidized housing inventory is 30 units or 2%, far below the 10% minimum state standard and the safe harbor against unfriendly 40B developments.

Market rate housing supply has not increased during this same timeframe as construction has focused on home-owner constructions for single-family residences.

Organizational Capacity

In 2008, Town voters created a Housing Commission to support and encourage the creation of sufficient workforce housing in Sheffield. Primary tasks are to: review existing By-Laws and provide recommendations that promote workforce housing in Sheffield; identify and prioritize appropriate areas for new housing to complement the recommendations of the Open Space Five Year Action Plan; and to utilize a regional approach to meeting housing needs in Sheffield in order to access resources and funding not readily available to small towns.

In 2020, the Select Board made affordable/workforce housing one of its top four priorities for the year and receive a District Local Technical Local Assistance grant from BRPC to develop a Housing Plan, designed specifically for Sheffield. However, the pandemic required all DLTA funds be shifted to meeting the healthcare and economic challenges; Sheffield received a 2021 DLTA to accomplish this goal. This housing assessment is part of that work.

Zoning By-Laws

Beginning with the adoption of Zoning By-Laws in 1995, Town voters have approved multiple zoning amendments designed to increase housing, including:

- Single family, two-family and three-family dwelling by right in all districts
- Multi-family dwelling containing up to 4 dwelling units by Special Permit in the Village Center and Rural Districts
- Multi-family dwelling containing up to 6 dwelling units by Special Permit in the Village Center District
- Boarding House by Special Permit in the Village Center District
- Accessory single-family dwelling unit by right in the Village Center District
- Accessory single-family dwelling by Special Permit in the Commercial and General Business Districts
- Accessory Apartment by right in the Village Center and Rural Districts

Sheffield's Zoning By-Law and Zoning Map may be found online at:

<https://www.sheffieldma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3806/f/uploads/zoningbylawmay2021final.pdf>

Sheffield's [Rules & Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in Sheffield](#) may be found online at:

https://www.sheffieldma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3806/f/uploads/subdivisionregs_ver5_06.pdf

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10. Implementation Recommendations

This section will be completed during the development of Sheffield's Housing Production Plan.

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11. Resource Guide

11.1 Housing Partnerships

Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority

Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority has programs for rental tenants, landlords, and homeowners. The Authority's services include:

Legal, Housing, and Consumer Counseling – Includes counseling on landlord/tenant law, fair housing laws, foreclosure laws, lead paint law, housing rehabilitation law, financial assistance, subsidized and public housing resources, budgeting and financial planning assistance, and housing search strategies.

Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP) – Homeless prevention program that works with individuals and families facing eviction as a result of behaviors related to a disability. TPP assists the tenant and the property owner to determine whether the disability can be reasonably accommodated, and the tenancy preserved. If tenancy cannot be preserved, TPP coordinates the tenant's transition to a more appropriate placement.

Dispute Resolution/Mediation Program – Provides community-based and court-connected dispute resolution services for tenants, landlords, homeowners, neighborhoods, consumers, and other stakeholders including mediation, conflict coaching, conciliation and facilitation. The program also offers dispute resolution training courses.

Foreclosure Prevention Counseling/Negotiation/Mediation – Provided in conjunction with the Attorney General's Office of Massachusetts, CHAPA, and the Western Massachusetts Foreclosure Prevention Center. Applicable areas include foreclosure laws, reinstatement and payment plans, budgeting and financial literacy classes, credit restoration, and loan modification options.

Affordable Housing Programs – Administers housing subsidies for 41 Section 8 SRO units in two connected buildings in North Adams.

SSVF – Partnership with Solder On to provide housing assistance to veterans struggling with homelessness or other issues related to housing, health care, or substance abuse.

Contact Information

Brad Gordon, Executive Director

Phone: 413-443-7138 x216

Email: bradg@bcrha.com

Webpage(s): <http://www.bcrha.com/>

Applicable to: residents

Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC)

Serving all of Berkshire County, BHDC seeks to “improve the quality of life for residents of Berkshire County by increasing affordable housing opportunities; delivering community development programs and projects; and operating a professional management company.”

BHDC is the most prominent housing development organization in the region. The organization has the experience and development capacity to provide technical assistance to less experienced groups and developers.

Contact Information

Eileen Peltier, President/CEO

Phone: 413-344-4852

Email: eogden@berkshirehousing.com

Webpage(s): <http://www.berkshirehousing.com/>

Applicable to: municipalities; residents

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation works to “strengthen communities through philanthropy and leadership” and ensure “all residents have opportunity for economic mobility and a high quality of life” throughout Berkshire County as well as several regions in Connecticut and New York. The foundation’s HousingUs initiative is a “tri-state collaborative effort of

nonprofit organizations and community leaders to promote affordable housing options in towns throughout our region.” The Accessory Apartment Program provides technical assistance as well as funding opportunities in order to promote, package, and build affordable housing.

Contact Information

Peter Taylor, Executive Director

Phone: 413-229-0370 x121

Email: ptaylor@berkshiretaconic.org

Webpage(s):

<https://www.berkshiretaconic.org/bGivebCurrentFutureDonors/DonatetoaFund/HousingUs/AccessoryApartmentProgram.aspx>

Applicable to: municipalities; residents; affordable housing developers

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity “partners with people in [local communities], and all over the world, to help them build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat for Humanity’s local affiliates within Berkshire County are the Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity located in Pittsfield and Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity located in North Adams. Programs provided by Habitat and its affiliates include:

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program – Free federal and state tax preparation for those with household incomes under \$56,000. VITA is funded by the Berkshire United Way and administered by the Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity.

Neighborhood Revitalization Program – Projects include Brush with Kindness Program (exterior painting and minor repairs), critical home repairs (repairs to alleviate health, life, and safety/code issues), and weatherization (improvements in energy efficiency and indoor air quality).

Contact information

Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity

Carolyn Valli, CEO

Email: cvalli@berkshirehabitat.org

Phone: 413-442-3181

Webpage(s): <https://berkshirehabitat.org/>

Applicable to: residents

Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity

Elisabeth Goodman, President

Email: <http://northberkshirehabitat.org/contact>

Phone: 413-664-4440

Webpage(s): <http://northberkshirehabitat.org/>

Applicable to: residents

Habitat for Humanity International

Phone: 800-422-4828

Email: <https://www.habitat.org/contact/form>

Webpage(s): <https://www.habitat.org/>

Applicable to: residents

Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire

The Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire builds affordable housing and create living-wage jobs by working collaboratively with town governments, open space organizations, and other local nonprofits.

Contact information

Email: info@cdcsb.org

Phone: 413-528-7788

Webpage(s): <https://cdcsb.org/>

Construct Inc. – Great Barrington

“For over fifty years, Construct has been the leader in the fight against homelessness and housing insecurity in the southern Berkshires.

We have over 80 affordable permanent housing options: This includes 20 units that prioritize homeless families and individuals. Of which, 13 are for homeless who need supportive services. In addition, we have 10 units (bedrooms) of transitional housing for homeless men and women.

Construct also provides support services through Cara Davis Project Home – everything from emergency assistance, transitional housing, workforce development, housing, and financial counseling.

Our Board of Directors meets monthly, on the third Wednesday of every month, and annually on the second Wednesday in June. Please contact us for more information if you would like to attend one of these meetings.

Construct is a 501 (3) (c) not for profit organization.”

Contact information

Email: info@constructberkshire.org

Phone: 413-528-1985

Webpage(s): <https://constructinc.org/>

Local Housing Authorities

Adams Housing Authority

Patti Volpi, Executive Director

Phone: 413-743-5924

Email: adamsha@bcn.net

Webpage(s): <http://www.ahauthority.com/Home.aspx>

Dalton Housing Authority

Susan Gregor, Executive Director

Phone: 413-684-2493

Email: SGregory@daltonhousing.org

Webpage(s): <https://www.daltonha.com/>

Great Barrington Housing Authority

Tina Danzy, Executive Director

Phone: 413-274-1142

Email: <https://www.townofgb.org/user/2543/contact>

Webpage(s): <https://www.townofgb.org/housing-authority>

Lee Housing Authority

Deborah Pedercini, Executive Director

Phone: 413-243-3464

E-mail: dpedercini@leehousingauthority.org

Lenox Housing Authority

Barbara Heaphy, Executive Director

Phone: 413-637-5585

E-mail: director.lenoxhousing@verizon.net

Webpage(s): <https://www.townoflenox.com/housing-authority>

North Adams Housing Authority

Jennifer Hohn, Executive Director

Phone: 413-663-5379, ext. 105

Webpage(s): <https://northadamsha.com/>

Pittsfield Housing Authority

Sharon LeBarnes, Executive Director

Phone: 413-443-5936

Email: contact@pittsfieldhousing.org

Webpage(s): <http://pittsfieldhousing.org/>

Stockbridge Housing Authority

Andrea Lindsay, Executive Director

Phone: 413-298-3222

Email: stockbridgeha@gmail.com

Webpage(s): <http://www.stockbridgehousing.com/>

Williamstown Housing Authority

Tammy Andrews, Executive Director

Phone: 413-458-8282

E-mail: wmstnha@outlook.com

Webpage(s): <http://www.williamstownha.com/Home.aspx>

Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development

The Women's Institute is a national affordable housing development organization, whose mission is to "promote economic resilience and stable homes by developing and preserving high quality affordable and supportive housing, with an emphasis on under-served populations." The Women's Institute serves as the developer or development consultant for projects relating to creation of affordable housing, permanent supportive housing, permanent supportive housing for veterans, congregate housing, workforce housing, and mixed-use development. The organization is also interested in preserving and stabilizing existing housing that might otherwise be converted to higher market-rate rents or deteriorate as the properties age. The Women's Institute can provide expertise in the following areas: pre-development, pre-construction, construction, operations and asset management, and general project management.

Contact information

Loni Willey, COO

Phone: 800-720-1195 x104

Email: lwilley@wihed.org

Webpage(s): <http://www.wihed.org>

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11.2 Federal Resources

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

Making Home Affordable (MHA)

Under the MHA umbrella there exist a number of programs to assist homeowners who are at risk of foreclosure and otherwise struggling with their monthly mortgage payments. The majority of these programs are administered through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Distressed homeowners are encouraged to contact their lenders and loan servicers directly to inquire about foreclosure prevention options that are available.

Modify or Refinance Your Loan for Lower Payments

Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) – HAMP lowers monthly mortgage payment to 31 percent of the homeowners verified monthly gross (pre-tax) income to make payments more affordable. The typical HAMP modification results in a 40 percent drop in a monthly mortgage payment. Eighteen percent of HAMP homeowners reduce their payments by \$1,000 or more.

Principal Reduction Alternative (PRA) – PRA helps homeowners whose homes are worth significantly less than they owe by encouraging servicers and investors to reduce the amount you owe on your home.

Second Lien Modification Program (2MP) – Mortgage modification or principal reduction on second mortgage, home equity loan, HELOC, or some other second lien for homeowners whose primary mortgage has been modified through HAMP.

Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP) – Mortgage refinancing available to homeowners who are current on their mortgage but are unable to obtain a traditional refinance due to a decline in home value.

"Underwater" Mortgages

Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP) – See above.

Principal Reduction Alternative – See above.

Treasury/FHA Second Lien Program (FHA2LP) – Second mortgage reduction or elimination for homeowners whose primary mortgage has been modified through FHA Short Refinance. Total amount of modified mortgage debt cannot exceed 115% of home's current value.

Assistance for Unemployed Homeowners

Home Affordable Unemployment Program (UP) – Temporary reduction or suspension of mortgage payments for at least twelve months for unemployed homeowners seeking re-employment.

FHA Special Forbearance – Extension of forbearance period by either reducing or suspending mortgage payments for up to twelve months for homeowners who have become unemployed and have no other sources of income.

Managed Exit for Borrowers

Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives (HAFA) – Short sale or deed-in-lieu of foreclosure for homeowners who cannot afford their mortgage payments and are interested in transitioning to more affordable housing.

"Redemption" – Period after home has been sold at foreclosure sale when it may still be reclaimed through the payment of the outstanding mortgage balance and all costs incurred during the foreclosure process.

Loss Mitigation for FHA-Insured Homeowners

FHA Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) – See above.

HOPE for Homeowners (H4H) – Mortgage refinancing for homeowners who cannot make their payments but can afford a new FHA-insured loan.

Contact information

National Servicing Center (NSC)

Phone: 877-622-8525

Webpage(s): https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/nsc/

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Outreach Center

Phone: 1-800-CALL FHA / 800-225-5342

Email: answers@hud.gov

Webpage(s): https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/fhahistory

Applicable to: residents

Community Development Block Program (administered at state level)

CDBG provides annual block grants to larger cities (entitlement communities) and to non-entitlement communities through a competitive proposal process. States also receive annual grants for re-distribution to non-entitlement communities. Currently, 37 entitlement communities in Massachusetts receive annual allocations directly from HUD, and DHCD receives an annual allocation that it awards through a once-a-year grant competition open to all non-entitlement communities.

CDBG funds can be used for a wide range of activities, including housing. Recipient communities may choose from a wide array of program eligible projects and planning activities. Income targeting is flexible. At least 51 percent of the beneficiaries of a CDBG-funded activity must be low- or moderate-income households, or the activity must remove slums or blight or fill an urgent community need.

Eligible housing activities include project planning, rental development and rehabilitation, first-time homebuyer assistance, and homeowner rehabilitation loan and grant programs. Homeowner rehabilitation programs are particularly popular. New construction of housing is not eligible, except under very limited circumstances. CDBG loan repayments can support additional CDBG-eligible activities. Entitlement communities and DHCD each publish an annual action plan that outlines how they plan to spend CDBG funds in the coming year. The annual plan must be consistent with their Consolidated Plan.

Non-entitlement communities can apply to DHCD for CDBG funding for local activities under the Community Development Fund (CDF), which accepts applications in an annual competition for almost any CDBG-eligible activity. Funds are awarded based on a community's needs score, however, meaning more affluent communities have a low chance of receiving an award. Frequently funded housing activities include housing rehabilitation loan programs and grants for planning or acquisition costs, as well as housing authority property improvements.

To take advantage of state CDBG funding, a community with limited staff may need to hire a consultant or enlist the services of an experienced housing agency. Regional planning agencies often help small towns apply for and manage CDBG funds. DHCD also accepts regional applications to enable smaller communities to partner with an experienced neighbor to offer housing rehabilitation programs.

Contact information

Webpage(s):

<https://www.hud.gov/states/massachusetts/community/cdbg>

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs

Applicable to: municipality

Foreclosure Avoidance Counseling

HUD-approved housing counseling agencies are available to provide information and assistance needed to avoid foreclosure. As part of President Obama's comprehensive Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan (HASAP), there is eligibility for special Making Home Affordable loan modification or refinance, to reduce monthly payments and maintain home ownership. Those eligible for the loan modification or refinance program can work with a counselor to compile an intake package for their servicer.

Foreclosure prevention counseling services are provided free of charge by non-profit housing counseling agencies working in partnership with the Federal Government. These agencies are

funded, in part, by HUD and NeighborWorks® America. There is no need to pay a private company for these services.

Contact information

Webpage(s):

<https://apps.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/fc/index.cfm?&webListAction=search&searchstate=MA&filterSvc=dfc>

Applicable to: residents

Good Neighbor Next Door

Law enforcement officers, pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade teachers and firefighters/emergency medical technicians can contribute to community revitalization while becoming homeowners through HUD's Good Neighbor Next Door Sales Program. HUD offers a substantial incentive in the form of a discount of 50% from the list price of the home. In return the homeowner must commit to live in the property for 36 months as his or her sole residence.

Contact information

Phone: 1-800-CALL FHA / 800-225-5342

Email: answers@hud.gov

Webpage(s): https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/reo/goodn/gnndabot

Applicable to: residents living in designated "revitalization areas"

HOME Investment Partnership Program

HOME is a federally funded program that assists in the production and preservation of affordable housing for low and moderate-income families and individuals. The program funds a broad range of activities including new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation of rental properties. Zero or low interest loans are available for housing developers who pass these loans on to homebuyers and renters. This program targets very low and low-income households. In a rental program, 20% of units must be set aside for households earning 50% or less of the area median

income. In a home ownership program, it is necessary that all households are at 80% or less of the area median income without regard to proportions.

Contact information

Webpage(s):

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/programs/home/

Applicable to: affordable housing developers (for-profit and nonprofit), community housing development organizations, and municipalities in cooperation with any of the above

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program

Federal tax credits are available for developers of affordable rental housing. At least 20% must be for very low-income households. As an alternative, 40% of the units may be set aside for households at 60% or less of the area median income.

Contact information

Websites:

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/lihtc.html>

<https://www.mhp.net/rental-financing/loan-products>

Applicable to: affordable housing developers

Property Improvement Loan Insurance (Title I)

FHA insurance on loans made by private lenders to improve properties that meet certain requirements. Lending institutions make loans from their own funds to eligible borrowers to finance these improvements. The Title I program insures loans to finance the light or moderate rehabilitation of properties, as well as the construction of nonresidential buildings on the property. This program may be used to insure such loans for up to 20 years on either single- or multifamily properties. The maximum loan amount is \$25,000 for improving a single-family

home and \$60,000 for a multifamily structure, with a maximum per-unit loan amount of \$12,000.

Contact information

Boston Office Phone: 617-994-8200

Toll-Free Phone: 800-CALL-FHA / 800-225-5342

Email: answers@hud.gov

Webpage(s): https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/title/title-i

Applicable to: affordable housing lenders, residents

203(K) Rehabilitation Mortgage Insurance

FHA's primary program for the rehabilitation and repair of single-family properties. Homebuyers and homeowners may finance up to \$35,000 into their mortgage to repair, improve, or upgrade their home. Homebuyers and homeowners can quickly and easily tap into cash to pay for property repairs or improvements, such as those identified by a home inspector or an FHA appraiser. Homeowners can make property repairs, improvements, or prepare their home for sale. Homebuyers can make their new home move-in ready by remodeling the kitchen, painting the interior or purchasing new carpet.

Contact information

Phone: 800-CALL-FHA / 800-225-5342

Email: answers@hud.gov

Webpage(s): https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/203k

Applicable to: affordable housing lenders

United States Department of Agriculture

The USDA's Rural Development program offers a variety of initiatives. Grants are highly competitive. Listed below are several of their most relevant programs. Visit their website for the complete list.

Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans

Section 502 direct loans are primarily used to help low-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas. Funds can be used to build, repair, renovate or relocate a home, or to purchase and prepare sites, including providing water and sewage facilities.

Contact information

Area Office

195 Russell St

Hadley, MA 01035-9521

Phone: 413-585-1000 Ext. 4

Webpage(s): <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-direct-home-loans>

Applicable to: residents

Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program

Section 502 guaranteed loans assist approved lenders in providing households earning less than 115% of the area median household income the opportunity to own adequate, modest, decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings as their primary residence in eligible rural areas.

Contact information

Area Office

195 Russell St

Hadley, MA 01035-9521

Phone: 413-585-1000 Ext. 4

Webpage(s): http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Guaranteed_Housing_Loans.html

Applicable to: residents

Single-Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants

Section 504 funds are loans and grants to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve or modernize their homes or grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards. The maximum grant amount is \$7,500 and the maximum loan amount is \$20,000.

Contact information

Area Office

195 Russell St

Hadley, MA 01035-9521

Phone: 413-585-1000 Ext. 4

Webpage(s): <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants>

Applicable to: residents

11.3 State Resources

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development & Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

Chapter 40R / Smart Growth Zoning

The Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District Act, Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, codified as MGL ch. 40R, encourages communities to create dense residential or mixed-use smart growth zoning districts, including a high percentage of affordable housing units, to be located near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as existing city and town centers, and in other highly suitable locations. Projects must be developable under the community's smart growth zoning adopted under Chapter 40R, either as-of-right or through a limited plan review process akin to site plan review. Upon state review and approval of a local overlay district, communities become eligible for payments from a Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund, as well as other financial incentives. Chapter 40R seeks to substantially increase the supply of housing and decrease its cost, by increasing the amount of land zoned for dense housing. It targets the shortfall in housing for low- and moderate-income households, by requiring the inclusion of affordable units in most private projects.

Webpage(s): <http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/chapter-40-r.html>

Applicable to: municipalities

Chapter 43D for Housing

Chapter 43D has been available for expedited economic development since 2006—but now residential zoning has been added. To be eligible, a municipality must provide for local permitting decisions on its designated priority development sites within 180 days of a complete application. This expedited permitting is attractive to developers, increases municipal visibility and is rewarded by preference in discretionary funding.

Contact information

Victoria Maguire, Permit Ombudsman/Director, Massachusetts Permit Regulatory Office

Phone: 617-788-3649

Webpage(s): <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/chapter-43d-expedited-local-permitting>

Applicable to: municipalities

Community Based Housing

The CBH Program provides funding for the development of integrated housing for people with disabilities, including elders, with priority for individuals who are in institutions or nursing facilities or at risk of institutionalization. CBH Program excludes clients of the DMH and DMR but includes many other people with disabilities who are institutionalized or at risk of institutionalization. Eligible populations include adults with a broad range of disabilities including mobility impairments, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, brain or spinal cord injuries, sensory disabilities, emotional disabilities and cognitive disabilities.

Contact information

Bradley Day, CEDAC

Phone: 617-727-5944

Email: bday@cedac.org

Webpage(s): <https://cedac.org/>

Andrew Nelson, DHCD

Phone: 617-573-1305

Email: Andrew.nelson@state.ma.us

Webpage(s): <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/community-based-housing-cbh>

Applicable to: nonprofit entities or entities controlled by nonprofits

The Community Preservation Act

This state law allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than

3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum.

More information: <http://www.communitypreservation.org/>

Applicable to: municipalities

Compact Neighborhoods

This is a tool similar to Smart Growth Zoning (40R) in its eligible locations and as-of-right zoning, but with different residential density and affordability requirements. Participating communities are eligible for preference in discretionary funding and possible Chapter 40B relief. For communities that are interested in maintaining control over land use decisions by planning ahead and getting credit for denser, as-of-right zoning, this tool provides another choice. There are two specified density thresholds under Compact Neighborhoods which must allow for: a minimum of 4 units per acre for single-family development and a minimum of 8 units an acre for multi-family (any structure with more than one unit).

Contact information

William Reyelt

Phone: 617-573-1355

Email: william.reyelt@state.ma.us

Webpage(s):

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/compact-neighborhoods>

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/ch40r/compact-neighborhoodspolicy.pdf>

Applicable to: municipalities

Emergency Solutions Grant Program

The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act) amended the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, including major revisions to what is now titled the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program. The ESG program assists homeless

households and households at risk of homelessness by providing the services necessary to help them quickly regain stable housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness. ESG services are procured on an annual basis. Therefore, the services provided may change each year. Currently, DHCD funds ESG services under the following components: Shelter Support; Rapid Re-housing; and Homelessness Prevention.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/emergency-solutions-grant-program-esg>

Available to: residents

Historic Owner-Occupied Residences

Municipalities have the option of adopting a special assessment that captures the increased value of substantially rehabilitated historic residences over a period of five years, with 20% of the increased assessed value added each year until the full value is reached. This can be an additional incentive for historic homeowners to continue to occupy and make appropriate renovations that may contribute to preserving the character of the community.

More information:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleIX/Chapter59/Section5j>

Applicable to: municipalities; residents

HomeBASE

HomeBASE is a flexible financial resource that is available to families who are eligible for the state's emergency Assistance (EA) Program. Families can get up to \$4,000 of Household Assistance to help in finding apartments, co-house by living with someone else and sharing household costs, pay for moving expenses to another state or location in-state, and other costs, such as child care to help secure or maintain employment or job training. HomeBASE helps to avoid a shelter placement, and instead find families housing solutions that that make families feel more stable.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/homebase>

Applicable to: residents

Housing Innovations Fund

The Housing Innovations Fund was created to support alternative forms of rental and ownership housing such as a specialized level of management or social services, an innovative financing or ownership structure or other features such as transitional housing types, limited equity cooperatives, and preservation of expiring use properties. They are available on a competitive basis to non-profit developers only (e.g. Construct Inc., CDCs, housing trusts, etc.). Rental units must remain affordable for at least 30 years. Of the total units, at least 50% must be occupied by households earning below 80% of the area median income. Of the lower income group, at least 50% (or 25% of the total units) must be occupied by households earning below 30% of the area median income.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/housing-innovations-fund-hif>

Applicable to: affordable housing developers (non-profit)

Housing Stabilization Fund

The Housing Stabilization Fund was created to stabilize communities by providing financial support for the acquisition, preservation and rehabilitation of affordable housing with a specific emphasis on reuse of distressed properties. It can also be used to allow new construction on infill sites created by demolition of distressed properties. Both profit and non-profit developers are eligible for the program, which can be used for both rental and project-based home ownership.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/housing-stabilization-fund-hsf>

Applicable to: affordable housing developers

Lead Paint Removal Credit

The State provides a state income tax credit for up to \$1,500 for each housing unit where lead paint is removed in compliance with state regulations. Unused credits may be carried over for up to 7 years.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-residential-property-tax-credits>

Applicable to: residents (homeowners only)

Local Initiative Program

The Local Initiative Program is a state program that encourages the creation of affordable housing by providing technical assistance to communities and developers who are working together to create affordable rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/local-initiative-program>

Applicable to: municipalities; affordable housing developers

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

Municipalities have the option of providing a property tax credit to low- and moderate-income senior citizens homeowners and renters.

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit>

Applicable to: residents (senior citizens only)

Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund

The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) provides resources to create or preserve affordable housing throughout the state for households whose incomes are not more than 110% of area median income. Funds are available for rental, home ownership and mixed-use projects as well as housing for the disabled and homeless but may be applied only to the affordable units. AHTF funds are used primarily to support private housing projects that provide

for the acquisition, construction or preservation of affordable housing. MassHousing and DHCD jointly administer AHTF.

Types of assistance include:

- Deferred payment loans
- Low- or no-interest amortizing loans
- Down-payment and closing cost assistance for first-time home buyers
- Credit enhancements and mortgage insurance guarantees
- Matching funds for municipalities that sponsor affordable housing projects
- Matching funds for employer-based housing

Funding threshold criteria include:

- Consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles
- Minimum term of affordability of 30 years
- Affordability of all AHTF units to households earning no more than 110% of area median income
- Financial feasibility.

Funding preferences include projects/developments that:

- Produce new affordable housing units
- Create units affordable to households with a range of incomes, particularly units for households with incomes below 80% of area median income
- Include affordable units for families, the disabled and the homeless
- Propose the longest term of affordability
- Use private funding sources and non-state funding sources to leverage the least amount of AHTF funds

More information:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/affordable-housing-trust-fund-ahtf>

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/hd/aht/ahtfguide.pdf>

Applicable to: governmental subdivisions; community development corporations; local housing authorities; community action agencies; community-based or neighborhood-based non-profit housing organizations; other non-profit organizations; for-profit entities; and private employers

MassWorks Infrastructure Program

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other eligible public entities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation and retention, housing development at density of at least 4 units to the acre (both market and affordable units) and transportation improvements to enhance safety in small, rural communities. The MassWorks Infrastructure Program is the administrative consolidation of six former grant programs (Public Works Economic Development, Community Development Action Grant, Growth Districts Initiative Grant Program, Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion Program, Small Town Rural Assistance Program, and the Transit Oriented Development Program), and is administered by the state's Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Executive Office for Administration & Finance.

Contact information

Phone: 617-788-3649

Email: MassWorks@state.ma.us

Webpage(s): <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworks-infrastructure-grants>

Applicable to: municipalities and other eligible public entities¹⁵

Senior Citizen Property Tax Work-Off Program

¹⁵ Eligible applicants: A city or town, or other public agency with a charter that enables them to accept state grants on behalf of the municipality, and where the public agency has been designated by municipal officers to apply for grants on behalf of that city or town. Any eligible public agency acting on behalf of a municipality must submit a letter of support from the chief administrative officer of that municipality.

The municipality may adopt a program authorizing residents aged 60 or older to volunteer their services to the community in exchange for a property tax reduction. The maximum allowed is \$1,500, and the rate of service cannot exceed the state's minimum wage.

More information:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleX/Chapter59/Section5k>

Applicable to: residents (60+ years old)

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11.4 Private & Non-Profit Opportunities

FRAMEWORK™ Online Home-buying Course

Offered through the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance, FRAMEWORK is a high quality online course; a fun way to become an informed, confident, and successful homeowner. It provides the facts you need to become well-informed about every step in the process. Many lenders have approved FRAMEWORK™ to meet their requirements for homebuyer education. Total cost for the FRAMEWORK™ online course plus an information packed, follow up in-person session at MAHA is \$100. You will pay \$75 for the online course through FRAMEWORK™ and \$25 for the MAHA session. Upon completion of the in-person session, you will receive a certificate that local lenders and mortgage programs will accept.

MAHA's FRAMEWORK™ follow-up classes include:

Information about the state's most affordable mortgage programs;

Presentations from a loan officer, home inspector, attorney, real estate agent, and insurance agent;

Opportunity to get answers to your home buying questions.

Contact information

Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance

1803 Dorchester Avenue

Dorchester, MA 02124

Phone: 617-822-9100

Email: info@mahahome.org

Webpage(s): https://mahahome.org/buyingahome_online

Applicable to: residents

Limited Equity Cooperatives

In this structure, each resident in a housing development is a shareholder in a member-controlled management corporation, which holds title to the property. Residents lease the units

from the coop and elect a board of directors. Purchase of the stock is similar to a down-payment but usually costs less. Members pay a proportional share of coop's mortgage, taxes, maintenance, and operating expenses. To preserve the housing as affordable, a formula determines the resale value of the stock. The formula is geared to provide a fair return on members' investment while keeping resale value in a price range accessible to low and moderate-income members.

Limited equity co-ops offer specific advantages over rental housing, including security, tax deductions, and some equity build-up, while housing costs remain lower in the long run. The cooperative is eligible for government subsidies that can reduce purchase costs or provide financing for the building.

Limited equity homeownership limits the resale prices of condos or single-family units, in a manner similar to limited equity coops. This approach is required through some state and federal subsidized programs and could be built into any locally developed program to preserve affordability. Typically, the length of deed restrictions used to limit equity remains in place no longer than 40 years.

More information:

https://www.uhab.org/sites/default/files/doc_library/Limited_Equity_Cooperatives_A_Legal_Handbook_0.pdf

Applicable to: residents (must live in a housing development)

Massachusetts Housing Partnership

Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) is a statewide public non-profit affordable housing organization that works in concert with the Governor and the state Department of Housing and Community Development to help increase the supply of affordable housing in Massachusetts. MHP administers the ONE Mortgage Program, provides permanent financing, and offers technical assistance to communities, non-profits and housing authorities. MHP programs are listed below.

ONE Mortgage Program

The ONE Mortgage Program offers first-time homebuyers a discounted fixed interest rate and a low down-payment, without requiring the homebuyer to purchase costly private mortgage insurance.

Contact information

Phone: 800-752-7131

Email: onemortgage@mhp.net

Webpage(s): <https://www.mhp.net/one-mortgage>

Applicable to: residents

MassDocs

MassDocs makes affordable rental housing development more efficient by offering one set of loan documents to developers receiving loans from multiple public funding programs. This means that review work can be coordinated by a single joint counsel for all subordinate public loans in a project. This is a plus for MHP borrowers, who often receive MHP financing in combination with other public funds. MassDocs is a collaborative effort of the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), MassHousing, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC).

Contact information

Email: massdocs@mhp.net

Webpage(s): <https://www.massdocs.com/>

Applicable to: affordable housing developers

Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund

A local housing trust allows municipalities to collect funds for affordable housing, segregate them out of the general municipal budget into a trust fund, and use the funds for local initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing.

Examples of what a local affordable housing trust can do include:

- Provide financial support for the construction of affordable homes by private developers
- Rehabilitate existing homes to convert to affordable housing
- Increase affordability in new housing development projects
- Develop surplus municipal land or buildings
- Preserve properties faced with expiring affordability restrictions
- Create programs to assist low- and moderate-income homebuyers
- Create programs to help low- and moderate-income families make health and safety repairs
- Educate and advocate to further affordable housing initiatives

More information: <https://www.gbhousing.org/>

OneSource

OneSource was developed by MHP and the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) to provide borrowers with construction and permanent financing, using a single set of loan documents and one attorney, saving the borrower time and money. MHP has done OneSource with MHIC and other lenders such as Bank of America, Citizens Bank, Wainwright Bank, Cape Cod Five, and Boston Community Capital. With OneSource, there's a coordinated closing between the construction lender and MHP, with one attorney reviewing a single set of construction and permanent loan documents. At the end of construction, there is a highly simplified "mini-closing" that allows MHP to take over the lender's role from the construction lender.

Contact information

David Rockwell, Director of Lending

Phone: 617-330-9944 x222

Email: drockwell@mhp.net

Webpage(s): http://www.mhp.net/rental_financing/one_source.php

Applicable to: borrowers

Tax-exempt financing

Through a program called MATCH, MHP provides triple-A credit enhancement for bonds, resulting in lower interest rates. MHP can also arrange for the direct placement of a bond issuance with one of their funding banks so that you can avoid the cost of a public offering.

More information: http://www.mhp.net/uploads/resources/match_term_sheet.pdf

Applicable to: affordable housing developers

Technical Assistance

MHP's Community Housing Initiatives team supports communities, local housing authorities and developers in their efforts to create affordable housing for low and moderate-income families. In addition to providing broad-based informational support to communities through workshops and publications, MHP provides staff and financial support.

More information: http://www.mhp.net/community_initiatives/programs/index.php

Applicable to: municipalities; local housing authority; affordable housing developers

MassHousing Mortgage Programs

Home for the Brave

MassHousing's Home for the Brave program offers affordable, no down-payment mortgage financing for veterans of the U.S. Armed Services. In conjunction, grants from the Veterans Administration are available to help disabled veterans make accessibility upgrades to properties they are interested in purchasing.

Program Features:

- Three percent down required
- Loans feature MI Plus, which covers principal and interest payments for up to six months in case of unemployment or deployment

- Closing cost assistance is available through MassHousing grants

Home for the Brave loans are made through approved community banks and are made possible by MassHousing. To apply, contact a participating lender.

Home for the Brave loans are available to:

- Veterans of the U.S. Armed Services
- Active-duty military
- Spouses of soldiers, sailors or marines killed while on active duty

To qualify for a Home for the Brave mortgage, you must:

- Borrowers must meet income limits
- No maximum loan amount or sales price
- Have a total housing debt of less than 45% and a total monthly debt of less than 41%

More information:

https://www.emasshousing.com/portal/server.pt/community/products/306/home_for_the_brave/10210

Applicable to: residents

MassHousing Mortgage with no Mortgage Insurance offers:

- Affordable interest rates, fixed for the life of the loan
- 30-year repayment terms
- Up to 97% financing on single-family homes and condominiums; 95% financing on 2-, 3- and 4-family homes
- No hidden fees or other surprises

To qualify for a MassHousing Mortgage with no MI, borrowers must:

- Meet income and loan limit guidelines

- Purchase a 1- to 4-family property
- Have good credit
- Complete a homebuyer education course

More information: <https://www.masshousing.com/en/home-ownership/homebuyers/homebuyer-loans>

Applicable to: residents

Purchase and Renovation Loans

MassHousing Purchase and Rehab loans help borrowers cover both the cost of purchasing a home in need of repairs, as well as the expense of rehabilitating that property. The maximum loan amount for a Purchase and Rehab mortgage is 97% of the purchase price plus rehabilitation costs or the estimated value of the home after rehabilitation (whichever is less). A 3% down-payment is required.

To qualify for a Purchase and Rehab mortgage, you must:

- Have a signed Purchase and Sales Agreement for a 1- to 4-family home
- Be creditworthy
- Have housing debt of less than 33% of your income and total monthly debt of less than 41% of your income

Loan Terms

The minimum rehabilitation amount for all property types is \$7,500

Rehabilitation costs include the cost of repairs, as well as such expenses as inspection fees, title update fees, and a required contingency reserve equal to 10% of the total rehabilitation cost

A mortgage payment reserve not to exceed four mortgage payments may be included in the cost of rehabilitation if the property will not be occupied during rehabilitation

The lender may charge fees as high as \$900 based on the cost of rehabilitation

Licensed contractors must complete all rehabilitation work

At the time of loan closing, the borrower will be responsible for the full mortgage payment on the total principal amount

More information: <https://www.masshousing.com/en/home-ownership/homebuyers/homebuyer-loans>

Applicable to: residents

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12. Appendices

Appendix A: Berkshire Realtors: South Berkshire County, MA -
Residential Real Estate Report

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